Eleanor Wenrych Reid
VI Upper

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General Editor:—J. H. FOWLER

THE GOLDEN TREASURY OF MODERN LYRICS

BOOK II

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THE GOLDEN TREASURY

OF

MODERN LYRICS

BOOK II

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

LAURENCE BINYON

WITH NOTES

BY

J. H. FOWLER

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BOOK II

CXVII

SINCE to be loved endures,
To love is wise :
Earth hath no good but yours,
Brave, joyful eyes :

Earth hath no sin but thine,
Dull eye of scorn :
O'er thee the sun doth pine
And angels mourn.

Robert Bridges.

CXVIII

THE LOVER TELLS OF THE ROSE IN HIS HEART

ALL things uncomely and broken, all things worn
out and old,
The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a
lumbering cart,
The heavy steps of the ploughman, splashing the
wintry mould,
Are wronging your image that blossoms a rose in
the deeps of my heart.

The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be told ;
I hunger to build them anew and sit on a green knoll apart,
With the earth and the sky and the water, remade, like a casket of gold
For my dreams of your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of my heart.

William Butler Yeats.

CXIX

DAISY

WHERE the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O the breath of the distant surf !—

The hills look over on the South,
And southward dreams the sea ;
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine :
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins
Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way ;
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song
Thronged in whose throat that day !

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray ;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face !
She gave me tokens three :—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
A still word,—strings of sand !
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end :
Their scent survives their close,
But the rose's scent is bitterness
To him that loved the rose !

She looked a little wistfully,
Then went her sunshine way :—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
  She went, and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
  And the partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul
  Was sad that she was glad;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
  The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
  Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
  And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
  That is not paid with moan;
For we are born in other's pain,
  And perish in our own.

Francis Thompson.

CXX

THE MIRACLE

Who beckons the green ivy up
  Its solitary tower of stone?
What spirit lures the bindweed's cup
    Unfaltering on?
Calls even the starry lichen to climb
By agelong inches endless Time?

Who bids the hollyhock uplift
  Her rod of fast-sealed buds on high ;
Fling wide her petals—silent, swift,
    Lovely to the sky ?
Since as she kindled, so she will fade,
Flower above flower in squalor laid.

Ever the heavy billow rears
  All its sea-length in green, hushed wall ;
But totters as the shore it nears,
    Foams to its fall ;
Where was its mark ? on what vain quest
Rose that great water from its rest ?

So creeps ambition on ; so climb
  Man's vaunting thoughts. He, set on high,
Forgets his birth, small space, brief time,
    That he shall die ;
Dreams blindly in his stagnant air ;
Consumes his strength ; strips himself bare ;

Rejects delight, ease, pleasure, hope,
  Seeking in vain, but seeking yet,
Past earthly promise, earthly scope,
    On one aim set :
As if, like Chaucer's child, he thought
All but " O Alma ! " nought.

Walter de la Mare.

CXXI

TO THE BODY

THOU inmost, ultimate
Council of judgment, palace of decrees,
Where the high senses hold their spiritual state,
Sued by earth's embassies,
And sign, approve, accept, conceive, create ;

Create—thy senses close
With the world's pleas. The random odours reach
Their sweetness in the place of thy repose,
Upon thy tongue the peach,
And in thy nostrils breathes the breathing rose.

To thee, secluded one,
The dark vibrations of the sightless skies
The lovely inexplicit colours run ;
The light gropes for those eyes.
O thou august ! thou dost command the sun.

Music, all dumb, hath trod
Into thine ear her one effectual way ;
And fire and cold approach to gain thy nod,
Where thou call'st up the day,
Where thou awaitest the appeal of God.

Alice Meynell.

CXXII

THE BODY

Only the nest of spices
That spends upon the air
Sweet smoke of sacrifices
When, terrible and fair,
The phœnix Soul arises
The heavenlier gold to dare !—
Alas ! the nest of spices
Fading through earthly air.

Rachel Annand Taylor.

CXXIII

TO POETS

We are the homeless, even as you,
Who hope and never can begin.
Our hearts are wounded through and through
Like yours, but our hearts bleed within.
We too make music, but our tones
'Scape not the barrier of our bones.

We have no comeliness like you.
We toil, unlovely, and we spin.
We start, return : we wind, undo :
We hope, we err, we strive, we sin,
We love : your love's not greater, but
The lips of our love's might stay shut.

We have the evil spirits too
That shake our soul with battle-din.
But we have an eviller spirit than you,
We have a dumb spirit within :
The exceeding bitter agony
But not the exceeding bitter cry.

Charles Hamilton Sorley.

CXXIV

THUNDERSTORMS

My mind has thunderstorms,
That brood for heavy hours :
Until they rain me words,
My thoughts are drooping flowers
And sulking, silent birds.

Yet come, dark thunderstorms,
And brood your heavy hours ;
For when you rain me words,
My thoughts are dancing flowers
And joyful singing birds.

William Henry Davies.

CXXV

EBBTIDE AT SUNDOWN

How larger is remembrance than desire !
How deeper than all longing is regret !
The tide is gone, the sands are rippled yet ;
The sun is gone ; the hills are lifted higher,

Crested with rose. Ah, why should we require
Sight of the sea, the sun ? The sands are wet,
And in their glassy flaws huge record set
Of the ebbed stream, the little ball of fire.
Gone, they are gone ! But, oh, so freshly gone,
So rich in vanishing we ask not where—
So close upon us is the bliss that shone,
And, oh, so thickly it impregns the air !
Closer in beating heart we could not be
To the sunk sun, the far, surrendered sea.

Michael Field.

CXXVI

SILENCE SINGS

So faint, no ear is sure it hears,
So faint and far ;
So vast that very near appears
My voice, both here and in each star
Unmeasured leagues do bridge between ;
Like that which on a face is seen
Where secrets are ;

Sweeping, like veils of lofty balm,
Tresses unbound
O'er desert sand, o'er ocean calm,
I am wherever is not sound ;
And, goddess of the truthful face,
My beauty doth instil its grace
That joy abound.

T. Sturge Moore.

CXXVII

NIGHTINGALES

BEAUTIFUL must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams wherefrom
Ye learn your song:
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long!

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throe of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.

Robert Bridges.

CXXVIII

CITIES AND THRONES AND POWERS

CITIES and Thrones and Powers,
Stand in Time's eye,
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die.
But, as new buds put forth
To glad new men,
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth
The Cities rise again.

This season's Daffodil,
She never hears
What change, what chance, what chill,
Cut down last year's :
But with bold countenance,
And knowledge small,
Esteems her seven days' continuance
To be perpetual.

So Time that is o'er-kind,
To all that be,
Ordains us e'en as blind,
As bold as she :
That in our very death,
And burial sure,
Shadow to shadow, well persuaded, saith,
" See how our works endure ! "

Rudyard Kipling.

CXXIX

CORRELATED GREATNESS

O NOTHING, in this corporal earth of man,
That to the imminent heaven of his high soul
Responds with colour and with shadow, can
Lack correlated greatness. If the scroll
Where thoughts lie fast in spell of hieroglyph
Be mighty through its mighty habitants ;
If God be in His Name ; grave potence if
The sounds unbind of hieratic chants ;
All's vast that vastness means. Nay, I affirm
Nature is whole in her least things exprest,
Nor know we with what scope God builds the worm.
Our towns are copied fragments from our breast ;
And all man's Babylons strive but to impart
The grandeurs of his Babylonian heart.

Francis Thompson.

CXXX

ALL THAT'S PAST

VERY old are the woods ;
And the buds that break
Out of the brier's boughs,
When March winds wake,
So old with their beauty are—
Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks ;
And the rills that rise
Where snow sleeps cold beneath
The azure skies
Sing such a history
Of come and gone,
Their every drop is as wise
As Solomon.

Very old are we men ;
Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
By Eve's nightingales ;
We wake and whisper awhile,
But, the day gone by,
Silence and sleep like fields
Of amaranth lie.

Walter de la Mare.

CXXXI

A SONG OF DERIVATIONS

I COME from nothing ; but from where
Come the undying thoughts I bear ?
Down, through long links of death and birth,
From the past poets of the earth.
My immortality is there.

I am like the blossom of an hour.
But long, long vanished sun and shower
Awoke my breath i' the young world's air.
I track the past back everywhere
Through seed and flower and seed and flower.

Or I am like a stream that flows
Full of the cold springs that arose
  In morning lands, in distant hills ;
  And down the plain my channel fills
With melting of forgotten snows.

Voices, I have not heard, possessed
My own fresh songs ; my thoughts are blessed
  With relics of the far unknown.
  And mixed with memories not my own
The sweet streams throng into my breast.

Before this life began to be,
The happy songs that wake in me
  Woke long ago and far apart.
  Heavily on this little heart
Presses this immortality.

Alice Meynell.

CXXXII

ODE IN MAY

Let me go forth, and share
The overflowing Sun
With one wise friend, or one
Better than wise, being fair,
Where the pewit wheels and dips
On heights of bracken and ling,
And Earth, unto her leaflet tips,
Tingles with the Spring.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,

The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride ?

The Song of Mingling flows,
Grave, ceremonial, pure,
As once, from lips that endure,
The cosmic descant rose,
When the temporal lord of life,
Going his golden way,
Had taken a wondrous maid to wife
That long had said him nay.

For of old the Sun, our sire,
Came wooing the mother of men,
Earth, that was virginal then,
Vestal fire to his fire.
Silent her bosom and coy,
But the strong god sued and pressed ;
And born of their starry nuptial joy
Are all that drink of her breast.

And the triumph of him that begot,
And the travail of her that bore,
Behold, they are evermore
As warp and weft in our lot.
We are children of splendour and flame
Of shuddering, also, and tears.
Magnificent out of the dust we came
And abject from the Spheres.

O bright irresistible lord,
We are fruit of Earth's womb, each one,
And fruit of thy love, O Sun,
For this thy spouse, thy adored.
To thee as our Father we bow,
Forbidden thy Father to see,
Who is older and greater than thou, as thou
Art greater and older than we.

Thou art but as a word of his speech,
Thou art but as a wave of his hand ;
Thou art brief as a glitter of sand
'Twixt tide and tide on his beach ;
Thou art less than a spark of his fire,
Or a moment's mood of his soul :
Thou art lost in the notes on the lips of his choir
That chant the chant of the Whole.

Sir William Watson.

CXXXIII

ON A MIDSUMMER EVE

I IDLY cut a parsley stalk,
And blew therein towards the moon ;
I had not thought what ghosts would walk
With shivering footsteps to my tune.

I went, and knelt, and scooped my hand
As if to drink, into the brook,
And a faint figure seemed to stand
Above me, with the bygone look.

I lipped rough rhymes of chance, not choice,
I thought not what my words might be ;
There came into my ear a voice
That turned a tenderer verse for me.

Thomas Hardy.

CXXXIV

A SONG OF ENCHANTMENT

A SONG of Enchantment I sang me there,
In a green-green wood, by waters fair,
Just as the words came up to me
I sang it under the wild wood tree.

Widdershins turned I, singing it low,
Watching the wild birds come and go ;
No cloud in the deep dark blue to be seen
Under the thick-thatched branches green.

Twilight came : silence came :
The planet of Evening's silver flame ;
By darkening paths I wandered through
Thickets trembling with drops of dew.

But the music is lost and the words are gone
Of the song I sang as I sat alone,
Ages and ages have fallen on me—
On the wood and the pool and the elder tree.

Walter de la Mare.

CXXXV

KINDNESS

Of the beauty of kindness I speak,
Of a smile, of a charm
On the face it is pleasure to meet,
That gives no alarm !

Of the soul that absorbeth itself
In discovering good,
Of that power which outlasts health,
As the spell of a wood

Outlasts the sad fall of the leaves,
And in winter is fine,
And from snow and from frost receives
A garment divine.

Oh ! well may the lark sing of this,
As through rents of huge cloud,
It breaks on blue gulfs that are bliss,
For they make its heart proud

With the power of wings deployed
In delightfullest air.
Yea, thus among things enjoyed
Is kindness rare.

For even the weak with surprise
Spread wings, utter song,
They can launch—in this blue they can rise,
In this kindness are strong,—

They can launch like a ship into calm,
Which was penn'd up by storm,
Which sails for the islands of balm
Luxuriant and warm.

T. Sturge Moore.

CXXXVI

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

When I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea ;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Mocharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin :
They read in their books of prayer ;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate ;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle
And the merry love to dance :

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With " Here is the fiddler of Dooney ! "
And dance like a wave of the sea.

William Butler Yeats.

CXXXVII

THE DARKLING THRUSH

I LEANT upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited ;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy.

CXXXVIII

THE LINNET

Upon this leafy bush
With thorns and roses in it,
Flutters a thing of light,
A twittering linnet,
And all the throbbing world
Of dew and sun and air
By this small parcel of life
Is made more fair ;
As if each bramble-spray
And mounded gold-wreathed furze,
Harebell and little thyme,
Were only hers ;
As if this beauty and grace
Did to one bird belong,
And, at a flutter of wing,
Might vanish in song.

Walter de la Mare.

CXXXIX

I WOULD be a bird, and straight on wings I arise,
And carry purpose up to the ends of the air :
In calm and storm my sails I feather, and where
By freezing cliffs the unransom'd wreckage lies :
Or, strutting on hot meridian banks, surprise
The silence : over plains in the moonlight bare
I chase my shadow, and perch where no bird dare
In treetops torn by fiercest winds of the skies.

Poor simple birds, foolish birds ! then I cry,
Ye pretty pictures of delight, unstir'd
By the only joy of knowing that ye fly ;
Ye are not what ye are, but rather, sum'd in a word,
The alphabet of a god's idea, and I
Who master it, I am the only bird.

Robert Bridges.

CXL

THE EXAMPLE

HERE'S an example from
A Butterfly ;
That on a rough, hard rock
Happy can lie ;
Friendless and all alone
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,
No care take I ;
I'll make my joy like this
Small Butterfly ;
Whose happy heart has power
To make a stone a flower.

William Henry Davies.

CXLI

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

A NAKED *house, a naked moor,*
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit
And poplars at the garden foot :
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn ;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour ; here
The army of the stars appear.

The neighbour hollows, dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset ;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter time
Silver the simple grass with rime ;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart-ruts beautiful ;
And when snow-bright the moor expands,
How shall your children clap their hands !
To make this earth, our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

CXLII

PIED BEAUTY

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow ;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim ;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls ; finches' wings ;
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough ;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange ;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how ?)
With swift, slow ; sweet, sour ; adazzle, dim ;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change :
Praise Him.

Gerard Hopkins.

CXLIII

THERE ARE STILL KINGFISHERS

Faith peace and joy to-day brings : all has failed
I this day put my hand to, well know I ;
Less blind than some so far, though that's not why ;
But with joy peace and faith my spirit is mailed,
Since on Wren's bridge at noon, unseen, unhailed,
I, all alone, saw the kingfisher fly.

Not as before, startled by friendly prod,
In stagnant ditch to imagine something quiver,
Lost while half-seen ; but brilliant, clear, and broad,
Forty-two yards up the middle of the river
Under my eyes shot the turquoise unflawed !
Nothing of me that bird knows and will never ;
But I rejoiced, as men rejoice in God,
Not that He cares for them, but lives for ever.

A. Y. Campbell.

CXLIV

INVERSNAID

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Gerard Hopkins.

CXLV

THE GIPSY GIRL

"Come, try your skill, kind gentlemen,
A penny for three tries!"
Some threw and lost, some threw and won
A ten-a-penny prize.

She was a tawny gipsy girl,
A girl of twenty years,
I liked her for the lumps of gold
That jingled from her ears ;

I liked the flaring yellow scarf
Bound loose about her throat,
I liked her showy purple gown
And flashy velvet coat.

A man came up, too loose of tongue,
And said no good to her ;
She did not blush as Saxons do,
Or turn upon the cur ;

She fawned and whined " Sweet gentleman,
A penny for three tries ! "
—But oh, the den of wild things in
The darkness of her eyes !

Ralph Hodgson.

CXLVI

A MOTHER TO A BABY

WHERE were you, Baby ?
Where were you, dear ?
Even I have known you
Only a year.

You were born, Baby,
When I was born.
Twelve months ago you
Left me forlorn.

Why did you leave me,
  Heart of my heart ?
Then I was all of you,
  Now but a part.

You lived while I lived,
  We two were one.
We two are two now
  While the days run.

When you can say, love,
  Baby, like me,
Think, as I think, love,
  You on my knee :

Every maid born, love,
  Womanly, mild,
Is in herself, love,
  Mother and child.

Mary Coleridge.

CXLVII

THE MODERN MOTHER

Oh, what a kiss
With filial passion overcharged is this !
  To this misgiving breast
This child runs, as a child ne'er ran to rest
Upon the light heart and the unoppressed.

Unhoped, unsought !
A little tenderness, this mother thought
The utmost of her meed.
She looked for gratitude ; content indeed
With thus much that her nine years' love had bought.

Nay, even with less.
This mother, giver of life, death, peace, distress,
Desired ah ! not so much
Thanks as forgiveness ; and the passing touch
Expected, and the slight, the brief caress.

O filial light
Strong in these childish eyes, these new, these bright
Intelligible stars ! their rays
Are near the constant earth, guides in the maze,
Natural, true, keen in this dusk of days.

Alice Meynell.

CXLVIII

When I see childhood on the threshold seize
The prize of life from age and likelihood,
I mourn time's change that will not be withstood,
Thinking how Christ said *Be like one of these.*
For in the forest among many trees
Scarce one in all is found that hath made good
The virgin pattern of its slender wood,
That courtesied in joy to every breeze ;

But scath'd, but knotted trunks that raise on high
Their arms in stiff contortion, strain'd and bare ;
Whose patriarchal crowns in sorrow sigh.
So, little children, ye—nay, nay, ye ne'er
From me shall learn how sure the change and nigh,
When ye shall share our strength and mourn to share.

Robert Bridges.

CXLIX

THE ELM

This is the place where Dorothea smiled.
I did not know the reason, nor did she.
But there she stood, and turned, and smiled at me :
A sudden glory had bewitched the child.
The corn at harvest, and a single tree.
This is the place where Dorothea smiled.

Hilaire Belloc.

CL

TO CHRISTINA AT NIGHTFALL

Little thing, ah, little mouse,
Creeping through the twilit house,
To watch within the shadow of my chair
With large blue eyes ; the firelight on your hair
Doth glimmer gold and faint,

And on your woollen gown
That folds a-down
From steadfast little face to square-set feet.

Ah, sweet ! ah, little one ! so like a carven saint,
With your unflinching eyes, unflinching face,
Like a small angel, carved in a high place,
Watching unmoved across a gabled town ;
When I am weak and old,
And lose my grip, and claim my small reward
Of tolerance and tenderness and ruth,
The children of your dawning day shall hold
The reins we drop and wield the judge's sword,
And your swift feet shall tread upon my heels,
And I be Ancient Error, you New Truth,
And I be crushed by your advancing wheels . . .
Good-night ! The fire is burning low,
Put out the lamp ;
Lay down the weary little head
Upon the small white bed.

Up from the sea the night winds blow
Across the hill, across the marsh ;
Chill and harsh, harsh and damp,
The night winds blow.
But, while the slow hours go,
I, who must fall before you, late shall wait and keep
Watch and ward,
Vigil and guard,
Where you sleep.
Ah, sweet ! do you the like where I lie dead.

Ford Madox Ford.

CLI

THE STOLEN CHILD

WHERE dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats ;
There we've hid our faery vats,
Full of berries,
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child !
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim gray sands with light,
Far off by furthest Rosses
We foot it all the night,
Weaving olden dances,
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight ;
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep.
Come away, O human child !
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glen-Car,
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star,
We seek for slumbering trout,
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams ;
Leaning softly out
From ferns that drop their tears
Over the young streams.
Come away, O human child !
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed ;
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside ;
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal-chest.
For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
From a world more full of weeping than he can understand.

William Butler Yeats.

CLII

FROLIC

The children were shouting together
And racing along the sands,
A glimmer of dancing shadows,
A dovelike flutter of hands.

The stars were shouting in heaven,
The sun was chasing the moon :
The game was the same as the children's,
They danced to the self-same tune.

The whole of the world was merry,
One joy from the vale to the height,
Where the blue woods of twilight encircled
The lovely lawns of the light.

George Russell (A. E.).

CLIII

THE LISTENERS

" Is there anybody there ? " said the Traveller,
  Knocking on the moonlit door ;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
  Of the forest's ferny floor :
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
  Above the Traveller's head :
And he smote upon the door again a second time ;
  " Is there anybody there ? " he said.

But no one descended to the Traveller ;
  No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
  Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
  That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
  To that voice from the world of men :
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
  That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
  By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
  Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
  'Neath the starred and leafy sky ;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
  Louder, and lifted his head :—
" Tell them I came, and no one answered,
  That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
  Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
  From the one man left awake :
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
  And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
  When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Walter de la Mare.

CLIV

LONDON SNOW

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town ;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing ;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down :
Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing ;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven ;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare :
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness ;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air ;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze

Their tongues with tasting, their hands with
snow-balling ;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees ;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed
wonder,
" O look at the trees ! " they cried, " O look at
the trees ! "
With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder :
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with
the snow ;
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil
they go :
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted ; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for
the charm they have broken.

Robert Bridges.

CLV

THE FISH

In a cool curving world he lies
And ripples with dark ecstasies.

The kind luxurious lapse and steal
Shapes all his universe to feel
And know and be ; the clinging stream
Closes his memory, glooms his dream,
Who lips the roots o' the shore, and glides
Superb on unreturning tides.
Those silent waters weave for him
A fluctuant mutable world and dim,
Where wavering masses bulge and gape
Mysterious, and shape to shape
Dies momently through whorl and hollow,
And form and line and solid follow
Solid and line and form to dream
Fantastic down the eternal stream ;
An obscure world, a shifting world,
Bulbous, or pulled to thin, or curled,
Or serpentine, or driving arrows,
Or serene slidings, or March narrows.
There slipping wave and shore are one,
And weed and mud. No ray of sun,
But glow to glow fades down the deep
(As dream to unknown dream in sleep) ;
Shaken translucency illumes
The hyaline of drifting glooms ;
The strange soft-handed depth subdues
Drowned colour there, but black to hues,
As death to living, decomposes—
Red darkness of the heart of roses,
Blue brilliant from dead starless skies,
And gold that lies behind the eyes,
The unknown unnameable sightless white
That is the essential flame of night,
Lustreless purple, hooded green,

The myriad hues that lie between
Darkness and darkness ! . . .

And all's one,
Gentle, embracing, quiet, dun,
The world he rests in, world he knows,
Perpetual curving. Only—grows
An eddy in that ordered falling,
A knowledge from the gloom, a calling
Weed in the wave, gleam in the mud—
The dark fire leaps along his blood ;
Dateless and breathless, blind and still,
The intricate impulse works its will ;
His woven world drops back ; and he,
Sans providence, sans memory,
Unconscious and directly driven,
Fades to some dank sufficient heaven.

O world of lips, O world of laughter,
Where hope is fleet and thought flies after,
Of lights in the clear night, of cries
That drift along the wave and rise
Thin to the glittering stars above,
You know the hands, the eyes of love !
The strife of limbs, the sightless clinging,
The infinite distance, and the singing
Blown by the wind, a flame of sound,
The gleam, the flowers, and vast around
The horizon, and the heights above—
You know the sigh, the song of love !

But there the night is close, and there
Darkness is cold and strange and bare ;

And the secret deeps are whisperless ;
And rhythm is all deliciousness ;
And joy is in the throbbing tide,
Whose intricate fingers beat and glide
In felt bewildering harmonies
Of trembling touch ; and music is
The exquisite knocking of the blood.
Space is no more, under the mud ;
His bliss is older than the sun.
Silent and straight the waters run.
The lights, the cries, the willows dim,
And the dark tide are one with him.

Rupert Brooke.

CLVI

THE OLD SHIPS

I HAVE seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire ;
And all those ships were certainly so old
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit, and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn,
An image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in
that same
(Fished up beyond Ææa, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship—who knows—who knows ?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

James Elroy Flecker.

CLVII

FLANNAN ISLE

" Though three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steer'd under the lee, we caught
No glimmer through the night ! "

A passing ship at dawn had brought
The news ; and quickly we set sail,
To find out what strange thing might ail
The keepers of the deep-sea light.

The winter day broke blue and bright,
With glancing sun and glancing spray,
As o'er the swell our boat made way,
As gallant as a gull in flight.

But, as we near'd the lonely isle ;
And look'd up at the naked height ;
And saw the lighthouse towering white
With blinded lantern, that all night
Had never shot a spark
Of comfort through the dark,
So ghostly in the cold sunlight
It seem'd, that we were struck the while
With wonder all too dread for words.

And, as into the tiny creek
We stole beneath the hanging crag,
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—
Too big, by far, in my belief,
For guillemot or shag—
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright
Upon a half-tide reef :
But, as we near'd, they plunged from sight
Without a sound, or spurt of white.

And still too mazed to speak,
We landed ; and made fast the boat ;

And climb'd the track in single file,
Each wishing he was safe afloat,
On any sea, however far,
So it be far from Flannan Isle :
And still we seem'd to climb, and climb,
As though we'd lost all count of time,
And so must climb for evermore.
Yet, all too soon, we reached the door—
The black, sun-blister'd lighthouse-door,
That gaped for us ajar.

As, on the threshold, for a spell,
We paused, we seem'd to breathe the smell
Of limewash and of tar,
Familiar as our daily breath,
As though 'twere some strange scent of death :
And so, yet wondering, side by side,
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied :
And each with black foreboding eyed
The door, ere we should fling it wide,
To leave the sunlight for the gloom :
Till, plucking courage up, at last,
Hard on each other's heels we pass'd
Into the living-room.

Yet, as we crowded through the door,
We only saw a table, spread
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread ;
But all untouch'd ; and no one there :
As though, when they sat down to eat,
Ere they could even taste,
Alarm had come ; and they in haste
Had risen and left the bread and meat :

For at the table-head a chair
Lay tumbled on the floor.

We listen'd ; but we only heard
The feeble cheeping of a bird
That starved upon its perch :
And, listening still, without a word,
We set about our hopeless search.

We hunted high, we hunted low,
And soon ransack'd the empty house ;
Then o'er the Island, to and fro,
We ranged, to listen and to look
In every cranny, cleft or nook
That might have hid a bird or mouse :
But, though we search'd from shore to shore,
We found no sign in any place :
And soon again stood face to face
Before the gaping door :
And stole into the room once more
As frighten'd children steal.

Aye : though we hunted high and low,
And hunted everywhere,
Of the three men's fate we found no trace
Of any kind in any place,
But a door ajar, and an untouch'd meal,
And an overtoppled chair.

And, as we listen'd in the gloom
Of that forsaken living-room—
A chill clutch on our breath—
We thought how ill-chance came to all

Who kept the Flannan Light :
And how the rock had been the death
Of many a likely lad :
How six had come to a sudden end,
And three had gone stark mad :
And one whom we'd all known as friend
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall :
And long we thought
On the three we sought,
And of what might yet befall.

Like curs a glance has brought to heel,
We listen'd, flinching there :
And look'd, and look'd, on the untouch'd meal
And the overtoppled chair.

We seem'd to stand for an endless while,
Though still no word was said,
Three men alive on Flannan Isle,
Who thought on three men dead.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

CLVIII

A PASSER-BY

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest ?

Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales oppressed,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capped, grandest
Peak, that is over the feathery palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

Robert Bridges.

CLIX

TEMPIO DI VENERE

A MARBLE ruin nigh forgotten
Fronts sheer on Naples bay ;
Its cornice stones are weather-rotten,
Stained by both rain and spray.

Its steps the mounting shore has buried,
All save the topmost three,
To which small waves run up like hurried
Sly kisses of the sea.

Its fluted columns crevice-jointed
Must totter every storm.
Bird-droppings have its eaves anointed,
Blunted each moulding's form.

With pavement chequer-rich sand-whitened,
Which tell-tales flaws of wind—
With walls, that once gay pictures brightened,
Blank as an old man's mind—

For fisher's painted boat 'tis stable,
Festooned with nets and cords,
Littered with dead-eyes, ends of cable,
Crab-baskets, boat-hooks, boards.

A wreckage mast, its only rafter,
Supports an old tanned sail.
Here Venus dwelt who so loved laughter ;
Here now chinks flute and wail.

Here once the pirate-Pompey's seaman
Offered her shells and gold ;
Here oft, flogged slave or pious leman
Complained that hearts are sold.

No more here marble limbs shall glisten,
Nor carved face smile here more,
And, bending forward half to listen,
Prompt those who mute adore.

Yet, though he call no goddess mother,
A child bathed here to-day
Who, naked, was as Cupid's brother,
So sturdy, arch, and gay !

T. Sturge Moore.

CLX

GATES OF DAMASCUS

Four great gates has the city of Damascus,
And four Grand Wardens, on their spears reclining,
All day long stand like tall stone men
And sleep on the towers when the moon is shining.

This is the song of the East Gate Warden
When he locks the great gate and smokes in his garden.

Postern of Fate, the Desert Gate, Disaster's Cavern, Fort of Fear,
The Portal of Bagdad am I, the Doorway of Diarbekir.

The Persian Dawn with new desires may net the
flushing mountain spires :
But my gaunt buttress still rejects the suppliance
of those mellow fires.

Pass not beneath, O Caravan, or pass not singing.
Have you heard
That silence where the birds are dead yet something
pipeth like a bird ?

Pass not beneath ! Men say there blows in stony
deserts still a rose
But with no scarlet to her leaf—and from whose
heart no perfume flows.

Wilt thou bloom red where she buds pale, thy
sister rose ? Wilt thou not fail
When noonday flashes like a flail ? Leave
nightingale the caravan !

Pass then, pass all ! " Bagdad ! " ye cry, and down
the billows of blue sky
Ye beat the bell that beats to hell, and who shall
thrust ye back ? Not I.

The Sun who flashes through the head and paints
the shadows green and red,—
The Sun shall eat thy fleshless dead, O Caravan,
O Caravan !

And one who licks his lips for thirst with fevered
eyes shall face in fear
The palms that wave, the streams that burst, his
last mirage, O Caravan !

And one—the bird-voiced Singing-man—shall fall behind thee, Caravan !
And God shall meet him in the night, and he shall sing as best he can.

And one the Bedouin shall slay, and one, sand-stricken on the way,
Go dark and blind ; and one shall say—" How lonely is the Caravan ! "

Pass out beneath, O Caravan, Doom's Caravan, Death's Caravan !
I had not told ye, fools, so much, save that I heard your Singing-man.

This was sung by the West Gate's keeper
When heaven's hollow dome grew deeper.

I am the gate toward the sea : O sailor men, pass out from me !
I hear you high on Lebanon, singing the marvels of the sea.

The dragon-green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-haunted sea,
The snow-besprinkled wine of earth, the white-and-blue-flower foaming sea.

Beyond the sea are towns with towers, carved with lions and lily flowers,
And not a soul in all those lonely streets to while away the hours.

Beyond the towns an isle where, bound, a naked
giant bites the ground :
The shadow of a monstrous wing looms on his
back : and still no sound.

Beyond the isle a rock that screams like madmen
shouting in their dreams,
From whose dark issues night and day blood
crashes in a thousand streams.

Beyond the rock is Restful Bay, where no wind
breathes or ripple stirs,
And there on Roman ships, they say, stand rows
of metal mariners.

Beyond the bay in utmost West old Solomon the
Jewish King
Sits with his beard upon his breast, and grips and
guards his magic ring :

And when that ring is stolen, he will rise in out-
raged majesty,
And take the World upon his back, and fling the
World beyond the sea.

This is the song of the North Gate's master,
Who singeth fast, but drinketh faster.

I am the gay Aleppo Gate : a dawn, a dawn and
thou art there :
Eat not thy heart with fear and care, O brother of
the beast we hate !

Thou hast not many miles to tread, nor other foes
than fleas to dread ;
Homs shall behold thy morning meal and Hama
see thee safe in bed.

Take to Aleppo filigrane, and take them paste of
apricots,
And coffee tables botched with pearl, and little
beaten brassware pots :

And thou shalt sell thy wares for thrice the
Damascene retailers' price,
And buy a fat Armenian slave who smelleth
odorous and nice.

Some men of noble stock were made : some glory
in the murder-blade :
Some praise a Science or an Art, but I like honour-
able Trade !

Sell them the rotten, buy the ripe ! Their heads
are weak : their pockets burn.
Aleppo men are mighty fools. Salaam Aleikum !
Safe return !

This is the song of the South Gate holder,
A silver man, but his song is older.

I am the Gate that fears no fall : the Mihrab of
Damascus wall,
The bridge of booming Sinai : the Arch of Allah
all in all.

O spiritual pilgrim rise : the night has grown her
single horn :
The voices of the souls unborn are half adream
with Paradise.

To Meccah thou hast turned in prayer with aching
heart and eyes that burn :
Ah Hajji, whither wilt thou turn when thou art
there, when thou art there ?

God be thy guide from camp to camp : God be
thy shade from well to well ;
God grant beneath the desert stars thou hear the
Prophet's camel bell.

And God shall make thy body pure, and give thee
knowledge to endure
This ghost-life's piercing phantom-pain, and bring
thee out to Life again.

And God shall make thy soul a Glass where
eighteen thousand Æons pass,
And thou shalt see the gleaming Worlds as men
see dew upon the grass.

And, son of Islam, it may be that thou shalt learn
at journey's end
Who walks thy garden eve on eve, and bows his
head, and calls thee Friend.

James Elroy Flecker.

CLXI

SENT FROM EGYPT WITH A FAIR ROBE OF TISSUE TO A SICILIAN VINE-DRESSER (276 B.C.)

Put out to sea, if wine thou wouldest make
Such as is made in Cos : when open boat
May safely launch, advice of pilots take ;
And find the deepest bottom, most remote
From all encroachment of the crumbling shore,
Where no fresh stream tempers the rich salt wave,
Forcing rash sweetness on sage ocean's brine ;
As youthful shepherds pour
Their first love forth to Battos gnarled and grave,
Fooling shrewd age to bless some fond design.

Not after storm ! but when, for a long spell,
No white-maned horse has raced across the blue,
Put from the beach ! lest troubled be the well—
Less pure thy draught than from such depth were due.
Fast close thy largest jars, prepared and clean !
Next weigh each buoyant womb down through the flood,
Far down ! when, with a cord the lid remove,
And it will fill unseen,
Swift as a heart Love smites sucks back the blood :—
This bubbles, deeper born than sighs, shall prove.

If thy bowed shoulders ache, as thou dost haul—
Those groan who climb with rich ore from the mine ;
Labour untold round Ilion girt a wall ;
A god toiled that Achilles' arms might shine ;
Think of these things and double knit thy will !
Then, should the sun be hot on thy return,
Cover thy jars with piles of bladder weed,
Dripping, and fragrant still
From sea-wolds where it grows like bracken fern :
A grapnel dragged will soon supply thy need.

Home to a tun convey thy precious freight !
Wherein, for thirty days, it should abide,
Closed, yet not quite closed from the air, and wait
While, through dim stillness, slowly doth subside
Thick sediment. The humour of a day,
Which has defeated youth and health and joy,
Down, through a dreamless sleep, will settle thus,
Till riseth maiden gay
Set free from all glooms past—or else a boy
Once more a school-friend worthy Troilus.

Yet to such cool wood tank some dream might dip :
Vision of Aphrodite sunk to sleep,
Or of some sailor let down from a ship,
Young, dead, and lovely, while across the deep,
Through the calm night, his hoarse-voiced comrades chaunt—
So far at sea, they cannot reach the land
To lay him perfect in the warm brown earth.

Pray that such dreams there haunt !
While, through damp darkness, where thy tun
doth stand,
Cold salamanders sidle round its girth.

Gently draw off the clear and tomb it yet
For other twenty days, in cedarn casks !
Where through trance, surely, prophecy will set ;
As, dedicated to light temple-tasks,
The young priest dreams the unknown mystery.
Through Ariadne, knelt disconsolate
In the sea's marge, so welled back warmth which
throbbed
With nuptial promise : she
Turned ; and, half-choked through dewy glens,
some great,
Some magic drone of revel coming sobbed.

Of glorious fruit, indeed, must be thy choice,
Such as has fully ripened on the branch,
Such as due rain, then sunshine, made rejoice,
Which, pulped and coloured, now deep bloom
doth blanch ;
Clusters like odes for victors in the games,
Strophe on strophe globed, pure nectar all !
Spread such to dry,—if Helios grant thee grace,
Exposed unto his flames
Two days, or if not, three ; or, should rain fall ;
Stretch them on hurdles in the house four days.

Grapes are not sharded chestnuts, which the tree
Lets fall to burst them on the ground, where red

Rolls forth the fruit, from white-lined wards set free,
And all undamaged glows 'mid husks it shed ;
Nay, they are soft and should be singly stripped
From off the bunch, by maiden's dainty hand,
Then dropped through the cool silent depth to sink
(Coy, as herself hath slipped,
Bathing, from shelves in caves along the strand)
Till round each dark grape water barely wink ;

Since some nine measures of sea-water fill
A butt of fifty, ere the plump fruit peep,
—Like sombre dolphin shoals when nights are still,
Which penned in Proteus' wizard circle sleep,
And 'twixt them glinting curves of silver glance
If Zephyr, dimpling dark calm, counts them o'er.—
Let soak thy fruit for two days thus, then tread !
While bare-legged bumpkins dance,
Bright from thy bursting press arched spouts shall pour,
And gurgling torrents towards thy vats run red.

Meanwhile the maidens, each with wooden rake,
Drag back the skins and laugh at aprons splashed ;
Or youths rest, boasting how their brown arms ache,
So fast their shovels for so long have flashed,
Baffling their comrades' legs with mounting heaps.
Treble their labour ! still the happier they,
Who at this genial task wear out long hours,
Till vast night round them creeps,

When soon the torch-light dance whirls them
away ;
For gods who love wine double all their powers.

Iacchus is the always grateful god !
His vineyards are more fair than gardens far ;
Hanging, like those of Babylon, they nod
O'er each Ionian cliff and hill-side scar !
While Cypris lends him saltness, depth, and peace ;
The brown earth yields him sap for richest green ;
And he has borrowed laughter from the sky ;
Wildness from winds ; and bees
Bring honey.—Then choose casks which thou
hast seen
Are leakless, very wholesome, and quite dry !

That Coan wine the very finest is,
I do assure thee, who have travelled much
And learned to judge of diverse vintages.
Faint not before the toil ! this wine is such
As tempteth princes launch long pirate barks ;—
From which may Zeus protect Sicilian bays,
And, ere long, me safe home from Egypt bring,
Letting no black-sailed sharks
Scent this king's gifts, for whom I sweeten praise
With those same songs thou didst to Chloë sing !

I wrote them 'neath the vine-cloaked elm, for
thee.
Recall those nights ! our couches were a load
Of scented lentisk ; upward, tree by tree,
Thy father's orchard sloped, and past us flowed

A stream sluiced for his vineyards ; when, above,
The apples fell, they on to us were rolled,
But kept us not awake.—O Laco, own
How thou didst rave of love !
Now art thou staid, thy son is three years old ;
But I, who made thee love-songs, live alone.

Muse thou at dawn o'er thy yet slumbering wife!—
Not chary of her best was nature there,
Who, though a third of her full gift of life
Was spent, still added beauties still more rare ;
What calm slow days, what holy sleep at night,
Evolved her for long twilight trystings fraught
With panic blushes and tip-toe surmise :
And then what mystic might—
All, with a crowning boon, through travail brought !
Consider this and give thy best likewise !

Ungrateful be not ! Laco, ne'er be that !
Well worth thy while to make such wine 'twould be :
I see thy red face 'neath thy broad straw hat,
I see thy house, thy vineyards, Sicily !—
Thou dost demur, good but too easy friend !
Come, put those doubts away ! thou hast strong lads,
Brave wenches ; on the steep beach lolls thy ship
Where vine-clad slopes descend,
Sheltering our bay, that headlong rillet glads,
Like a stripped child fain in the sea to dip.

T. Sturge Moore.

CLXII

WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

We are they who come faster than fate: we are
they who ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the
Sunset, beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained
solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children
who mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we
rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the
spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the
forts of Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine
on the ruins of Rum.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain,
and by God we will go there again;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where
the Waters of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where
men were afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword
was a broker of doom;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured
not a few of ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine
bitter and strong :
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as
bright as a desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when
their cavalry thundered along :
For the coward was drowned with the brave
when our battle sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the
glory to God in our song.

James Elroy Flecker.

CLXIII

THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one ;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one ;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Francis William Bourdillon.

CLXIV

ΕΡΩΣ

Why hast thou nothing in thy face?
Thou idol of the human race,
Thou tyrant of the human heart,
The flower of lovely youth that art;
Yea, and that standest in thy youth
An image of eternal Truth,
With thy exuberant flesh so fair,
That only Pheidias might compare,
Ere from his chaste marmoreal form
Time had decayed the colours warm;
Like to his gods in thy proud dress,
Thy starry sheen of nakedness.

Surely thy body is thy mind,
For in thy face is nought to find,
Only thy soft unchristen'd smile,
That shadows neither love nor guile,
But shameless will and power immense,
In secret sensuous innocence.

O king of joy, what is thy thought?
I dream thou knowest it is nought,
And wouldst in darkness come, but thou
Makest the light where'er thou go.
Ah yet no victim of thy grace,
None who e'er long'd for thy embrace,
Hath cared to look upon thy face

Robert Bridges.

CLXV

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet ;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree ;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs ;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

William Butler Yeats.

CLXVI

AFTER TWO YEARS

She is all so slight
And tender and white
As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
  As he loves Mary,
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
  That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
  Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
  God has done well to me.

Richard Aldington.

CLXVII

ET SUNT COMMERCIA CŒLI

I DID not raise mine eyes to hers,
  Although I knew she passed me near :
I said, " Her shadow round me stirs ;
  It is enough that she is here,
And that, for once, my way is hers."

I did not look upon her face,
  I knew with whom her heart confers ;
For more, that moment had no place :
  I did not raise mine eyes to hers,
I did not look upon her face.

Herbert P. Horne.

CLXVIII

THE HEART OF THE WOMAN

O WHAT to me the little room
That was brimmed up with prayer and rest ;
He bade me out into the gloom,
And my breast lies upon his breast.

O what to me my mother's care,
The house where I was safe and warm ;
The shadowy blossom of my hair
Will hide us from the bitter storm.

O hiding hair and dewy eyes,
I am no more with life and death,
My heart upon his warm heart lies,
My breath is mixed into his breath.

William Butler Yeats.

CLXIX

THE HILL

BREATHLESS, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, " Through glory and ecstasy we pass ;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ." " And when
we die
All's over that is ours ; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I,
" Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won ! "

" We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith ! " we said ;
" We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness ! . . ." Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

Rupert Brooke.

CLXX

" NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO CYNARAE "

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara ! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine ;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head :
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara ! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay ;

Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet ;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was grey :
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara ! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara ! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses, riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind ;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long :
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara ! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara ! the night is thine ;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire :
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara ! in my fashion.

Ernest Dowson.

CLXXI

O WOMAN of my love, I am walking with you on the sand,
And the moon's white on the sand and the foam's white in the sea ;
And I am thinking my own thoughts, and your hand is on my hand,
And your heart thinks by my side, and it's not thinking of me.

O woman of my love, the world is narrow and
wide,
And I wonder which is the lonelier of us two ?
You are thinking of one who is near to your heart,
and far from your side ;
I am thinking my own thoughts, and they are all
thoughts of you.

Arthur Symons.

CLXXII

THE APPARITION

My dead Love came to me, and said :
" God gives me one hour's rest
To spend upon the earth with thee :
How shall we spend it best ? "

" Why, as of old," I said ; and so
We quarrelled as of old.
But when I turn'd to make my peace
That one short hour was told.

Stephen Phillips.

CLXXIII

I HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE GATES

His heart, to me, was a place of palaces and
pinnacles and shining towers ;
I saw it then as we see things in dreams,—I do
not remember how long I slept ;

I remember the trees, and the high, white walls,
and how the sun was always on the towers ;
The walls are standing to-day, and the gates : I
have been through the gates, I have groped,
I have crept
Back, back. There is dust in the streets, and
blood ; they are empty ; darkness is over
them ;
His heart is a place with the lights gone out, for-
saken by great winds and the heavenly rain,
unclean and unswept,
Like the heart of the holy city, old, blind, beautiful
Jerusalem,
Over which Christ wept.

Charlotte Mew.

CLXXIV

THE TRAGIC MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

I COULD wish to be dead !
Too quick with life were the tears I shed,
Too sweet for tears is the life I led ;
And ah, too lonesome my marriage-bed !
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead,
For just a word that rings in my head ;
Too dear, too dear are the words he said,
They must never be remembered.
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead :
The wish to be loved is all mis-read,
And to love, one learns when one is wed,
Is to suffer bitter shame ; instead
I could wish to be dead.

Michael Field.

CLXXV

SHE comes not when Noon is on the roses—
Too bright is Day.
She comes not to the soul till it reposes
From work and play.

But when Night is on the hills, and the great Voices
Roll in from sea,
By starlight and by candlelight and dreamlight
She comes to me.

Herbert Trench.

CLXXVI

RENOUNCEMENT

I MUST not think of thee ; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the thought that lurks in all delight—
The thought of thee—and in the blue Heaven's height,
And in the sweetest passage of a song.

Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
This breast, the thought of thee waits, hidden yet
bright ;
But it must never, never come in sight ;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.

But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

Alice Meynell.

CLXXVII

NEVER GIVE ALL THE HEART

Never give all the heart, for love
Will hardly seem worth thinking of
To passionate women if it seem
Certain, and they never dream
That it fades out from kiss to kiss ;
For everything that's lovely is
But a brief, dreamy, kind delight.
O never give the heart outright,
For they, for all smooth lips can say,
Have given their hearts up to the play.
And who could play it well enough
If deaf and dumb and blind with love ?
He that made this knows all the cost,
For he gave all his heart and lost.

William Butler Yeats.

CLXXVIII

We were not made for refuges of lies,
  And false embattled bulwarks will not screen us.
We mocked the careful shieldings of the wise,
  And only utter truth can be between us.

Long suns and moons have wrought this day at length,
  The heavens in naked majesty have told thee.
To see me as I am have thou the strength;
  And, even as thou art, I dare behold thee.

Mary Coleridge.

CLXXIX

THE VISITING SEA

As the inhastening tide doth roll,
Home from the deep, along the whole
  Wide shining strand, and floods the caves
  —Your love comes filling with happy waves
The open sea-shore of my soul.

But inland from the seaward spaces,
None knows, not even you, the places
  Brimmed, at your coming, out of sight,
  —The little solitudes of delight
This tide constrains in dim embraces.

You see the happy shore, wave-rimmed,
But know not of the quiet dimmed
  Rivers your coming floods and fills,
  The little pools 'mid happier hills,
My silent rivulets, over-brimmed.

What, I have secrets from you ? Yes.
But, visiting Sea, your love doth press
  And reach in further than you know,
  And fills all these ; and, when you go,
There's loneliness in loneliness.

Alice Meynell.

CLXXX

DREAM-TRYST

The breaths of kissing night and day
  Were mingled in the eastern Heaven :
Throbbing with unheard melody
  Shook Lyra all its star-chord seven :
    When dusk shrunk cold, and light trod shy,
      And dawn's grey eyes were troubled grey ;
    And souls went palely up the sky,
      And mine to Lucidé.

There was no change in her sweet eyes
  Since last I saw those sweet eyes shine ;
There was no change in her deep heart
  Since last that deep heart knocked at mine.

Her eyes were clear, her eyes were Hope's
  Wherein did ever come and go
The sparkle of the fountain drops
  From her sweet soul below.

The chambers in the house of dreams
  Are fed with so divine an air,
That Time's hoar wings grow young therein,
  And they who walk there are most fair.
I joyed for me, I joyed for her,
  Who with the Past meet girt about:
Where our last kiss still warms the air,
  Nor can her eyes go out.

Francis Thompson.

CLXXXI

TO A LOST LOVE

I CANNOT look upon thy grave,
  Though there the rose is sweet:
Better to hear the long wave wash
  These wastes about my feet!

Shall I take comfort? Dost thou live
  A spirit, though afar,
With a deep hush about thee, like
  The stillness round a star?

Oh, thou art cold! In that high sphere
  Thou art a thing apart,
Losing in saner happiness
  This madness of the heart.

And yet, at times, thou still shalt feel
A passing breath, a pain ;
Disturb'd, as though a door in heaven
Had oped and closed again.

And thou shalt shiver, while the hymns,
The solemn hymns shall cease ;
A moment half remember me :
Then turn away to peace.

But oh, for evermore thy look,
Thy laugh, thy charm, thy tone,
Thy sweet and wayward earthliness,
Dear trivial things, are gone !

Therefore I look not on thy grave,
Though there the rose is sweet ;
But rather hear the loud wave wash
These wastes about my feet.

Stephen Phillips

CLXXXII

WHETHER I live, or whether I die,
Whatever the worlds I see,
I shall come to you by-and-by,
And you will come to me.

Whoever was foolish, we were wise,
We crossed the boundary line,
I saw my soul look out of your eyes,
You saw your soul in mine.

Mary Coleridge.

CLXXXIII

My delight and thy delight
Walking, like two angels white,
In the gardens of the night :

My desire and thy desire
Twining to a tongue of fire,
Leaping live, and laughing higher ;

Thro' the everlasting strife
In the mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun,
Hath the secret of the sun.

Love can tell, and love alone,
Whence the million stars were strewn,
Why each atom knows its own,
How, in spite of woe and death,
Gay is life, and sweet is breath :

This he taught us, this we knew,
Happy in his science true,
Hand in hand as we stood
'Neath the shadows of the wood,
Heart to heart as we lay
In the dawning of the day.

Robert Bridges.

CLXXXIV

BAILE AND AILLINN

. . . . .

About the time when Christ was born,
When the long wars for the White Horn
And the Brown Bull had not yet come,
Young Baile Honey-Mouth, whom some
Called rather Baile Little-Land,
Rode out of Emain with a band
Of harpers and young men; and they
Imagined, as they struck the way
To many-pastured Muirthemne,
That all things fell out happily,
And there, for all that fools had said,
Baile and Aillinn would be wed.

They found an old man running there:
He had ragged long grass-coloured hair;
He had knees that stuck out of his hose;
He had puddle water in his shoes;
He had half a cloak to keep him dry,
Although he had a squirrel's eye.

. . . . .

That runner said: "I am from the south;
I run to Baile Honey-Mouth,
To tell him how the girl Aillinn
Rode from the country of her kin,
And old and young men rode with her:
For all that country had been astir

If anybody half as fair
Had chosen a husband anywhere
But where it could see her every day.
When they had ridden a little way
An old man caught the horse's head
With : ' You must home again, and wed
With somebody in your own land.'
A young man cried and kissed her hand,
' O lady, wed with one of us ' ;
And when no face grew piteous
For any gentle thing she spake,
She fell and died of the heart-break."

Because a lover's heart's worn out,
Being tumbled and blown about
By its own blind imagining,
And will believe that anything
That is bad enough to be true, is true,
Baile's heart was broken in two ;
And he being laid upon green boughs,
Was carried to the goodly house
Where the Hound of Ulad sat before
The brazen pillars of his door,
His face bowed low to weep the end
Of the harper's daughter and her friend.
For although years had passed away
He always wept them on that day,
For on that day they had been betrayed ;
And now that Honey-Mouth is laid
Under a cairn of sleepy stone
Before his eyes, he has tears for none,
Although he is carrying stone, but two
For whom the cairn's but heaped anew.

. . . . .

Now had that old gaunt crafty one,
Gathering his cloak about him, run
Where Aillinn rode with waiting maids,
Who amid leafy lights and shades
Dreamed of the hands that would unlace
Their bodices in some dim place
When they had come to the marriage bed;
And harpers, pacing with high head
As though their music were enough
To make the savage heart of love
Grow gentle without sorrowing,
Imagining and pondering
Heaven knows what calamity;

"Another's hurried off," cried he,
"From heat and cold and wind and wave;
They have heaped the stones above his grave
In Muirthemne, and over it
In changeless Ogham letters writ—
Baile, that was of Rury's seed.
But the gods long ago decreed
No waiting maid should ever spread
Baile and Aillinn's marriage bed,
For they should clip and clip again
Where wild bees hive on the Great Plain.
Therefore it is but little news
That put this hurry in my shoes."

Then seeing that he scarce had spoke
Before her love-worn heart had broke,
He ran and laughed until he came
To that high hill the herdsmen name

The Hill Seat of Leighin, because
Some god or king had made the laws
That held the land together there,
In old times among the clouds of the air.

That old man climbed ; the day grew dim ;
Two swans came flying up to him,
Linked by a gold chain each to each,
And with low murmuring laughing speech
Alighted on the windy grass.
They knew him : his changed body was
Tall, proud and ruddy, and light wings
Were hovering over the harp-strings
That Etain, Midhir's wife, had wove
In the hid place, being crazed by love.

What shall I call them ? fish that swim,
Scale rubbing scale where light is dim
By a broad water-lily leaf ;
Or mice in the one wheaten sheaf
Forgotten at the threshing place ;
Or birds lost in the one clear space
Of morning light in a dim sky ;
Or, it may be, the eyelids of one eye,
Or the door pillars of one house,
Or two sweet blossoming apple-boughs
That have one shadow on the ground ;
Or the two strings that made one sound
Where that wise harper's finger ran.
For this young girl and this young man
Have happiness without an end,
Because they have made so good a friend

They know all wonders, for they pass
The towery gates of Gorias,
And Findrias and Falias,
And long-forgotten Murias,
Among the giant kings whose hoard,
Cauldron and spear and stone and sword,
Was robbed before earth gave the wheat ;
Wandering from broken street to street
They come where some huge watcher is,
And tremble with their love and kiss.

They know undying things, for they
Wander where earth withers away,
Though nothing troubles the great streams
But light from the pale stars, and gleams
From the holy orchards, where there is none
But fruit that is of precious stone,
Or apples of the sun and moon.

What were our praise to them ? They eat
Quiet's wild heart, like daily meat ;
Who when night thickens are afloat
On dappled skins in a glass boat,
Far out under a windless sky ;
While over them birds of Aengus fly,
And over the tiller and the prow,
And waving white wings to and fro
Awaken wanderings of light air
To stir their coverlet and their hair.

And poets found, old writers say,
A yew tree where his body lay ;

But a wild apple hid the grass
With its sweet blossom where hers was ;
And being in good heart, because
A better time had come again
After the deaths of many men,
And that long fighting at the ford,
They wrote on tablets of thin board,
Made of the apple and the yew,
All the love stories that they knew.

. . . . .

William Butler Yeats.

CLXXXV

TO MEMORY

STRANGE Power, I know not what thou art,
Murderer or mistress of my heart.
I know I'd rather meet the blow
Of my most unrelenting foe
Than live—as I now live—to be
Slain twenty times a day by thee.

Yet, when I would command thee hence,
Thou mockest at the vain pretence,
Murmuring in mine ear a song
Once loved, alas ! forgotten long ;
And on my brow I feel a kiss
That I would rather die than miss.

Mary Coleridge.

CLXXXVI

A CHILD'S KISS

ONCE, bright Sylviola ! in days not far,
Once—in that nightmare-time which still doth haunt
My dreams, a grim, unbidden visitant—
Forlorn, and faint, and stark,
I had endured through watches of the dark
The abashless inquisition of each star,
Yea, was the outcast mark
Of all those heavenly passers' scrutiny ;
Stood bound and helplessly
For Time to shoot his barbèd minutes at me ;
Suffered the trampling hoof of every hour
In night's slow-wheelèd car ;
Until the tardy dawn dragged me at length
From under those dread wheels ; and, bled of strength,
I waited the inevitable last.
Then there came past
A child ; like thee, a spring-flower ; but a flower
Fallen from the budded coronal of Spring,
And through the city-streets blown withering.
She passed,—O brave, sad, lovingest, tender thing !—
And of her own scant pittance did she give,
That I might eat and live :
Then fled, a swift and trackless fugitive.
Therefore I kissed in thee
The heart of Childhood, so divine for me ;

And her, through what sore ways,
And what unchildish days,
Borne from me now, as then, a trackless fugitive.
Therefore I kissed in thee
Her, child ! and innocency,
And spring, and all things that have gone from me,
And that shall never be ;
All vanished hopes, and all most hopeless bliss,
Came with thee to my kiss.
And ah ! so long myself had strayed afar
From child, and woman, and the boon earth's green,
And all wherewith life's face is fair beseen ;
Journeying its journey bare
Five suns, except of the all-kissing sun
Unkissed of one ;
Almost I had forgot
The healing harms,
And whitest witchery, a-lurk in that
Authentic cestus of two girdling arms :
And I remembered not
The subtle sanctities which dart
From childish lips' unvalued precious brush,
Nor how it makes the sudden lilies push
Between the loosening fibres of the heart.
Then, that thy little kiss
Should be to me all this,
Let workaday wisdom blink sage lids thereat ;
Which towers a flight three hedgerows high, poor bat !
And straightway charts me out the empyreal air.

Its chart I wing not by, its canon of worth
Scorn not, nor reck though mine should breed it mirth :
And howso thou and I may be disjoint,
Yet still my falcon spirit makes her point
Over the covert where
Thou, sweetest quarry, hast put in from her !

Francis Thompson.

CLXXXVII

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
When first we kissed beside the thorn,
So strangely sweet, it was not strange
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell—let truth be told—
That love will change in growing old ;
Though day by day is nought to see,
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
Quite to forget what once he was,
Nor even in fancy to recall
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
So deep in summer floods is drowned,
I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
How love so young could be so sweet.

Robert Bridges.

CLXXXVIII

If all the tears thou madest mine
Set in thy heaven for stars could shine,
  Thou shouldst not want for light,
  Even in the darkest night.

If all the joys thou madest one
To light my heart could be thy sun,
  So great would be the light
  Thou never shouldst have night.

Margaret L. Woods.

CLXXXIX

The clouds that are so light,
Beautiful, swift and bright,
Cast shadows on field and park
Of the earth that is so dark.

And even so now, light one!
Beautiful, swift and bright one!
You let fall on a heart that was dark,
Unillumined, a deeper mark.

But clouds would have, without earth
To shadow, far less worth:
Away from your shadow on me
Your beauty less would be,

And if it still be treasured
In age hence, it shall be measured
By this small dark spot
Without which it were not.

Edward Thomas.

CXC

THE FOLLY OF BEING COMFORTED

One that is ever kind said yesterday :
" Your well-beloved's hair has threads of grey,
And little shadows come about her eyes ;
Time can but make it easier to be wise
Though now it seem impossible, and so
Patience is all that you have need of."
No,
I have not a crumb of comfort, not a grain.
Time can but make her beauty over again :
Because of that great nobleness of hers
The fire that stirs about her, when she stirs
Burns but more clearly. O she had not these ways
When all the wild summer was in her gaze.
O heart ! O heart ! if she'd but turn her head,
You'd know the folly of being comforted.

William Butler Yeats.

CXCI

What is this atom which contains the whole,
This miracle which needs adjuncts so strange,
This, which imagined God and is the soul,
The steady star persisting amid change ?

What waste, that smallness of such power should need
Such clumsy tools so easy to destroy,
Such wasteful servants difficult to feed,
Such indirect dark avenues to joy.
Why, if its business is not mainly earth,
Should it demand such heavy chains to sense ?
A heavenly thing demands a swifter birth,
A quicker hand to act intelligence ;
An earthly thing were better like the rose,
At peace with clay from which its beauty grows.

John Masefield.

CXCII

O LITTLE self, within whose smallness lies
All that man was, and is, and will become,
Atom unseen that comprehends the skies
And tells the tracks by which the planets roam ;
That, without moving, knows the joys of wings,
The tiger's strength, the eagle's secrecy,
And in the hovel can consort with kings,
Or clothe a God with his own mystery.
O with what darkness do we cloak thy light,
What dusty folly gather thee for food,
Thou who alone art knowledge and delight,
The heavenly bread, the beautiful, the good.
O living self, O God, O morning star,
Give us thy light, forgive us what we are.

John Masefield.

CXCIII

NIGHT-ERRANTRY

THREE long breaths of the blessed night
And I am fast asleep ;
No need to read by candle-light
Or count a flock of sheep.

Deep, deep I lie as any dead,
Save my breath comes and goes ;
The holy dark is like a bed
With violet curtains close.

And while enfolded I lie there
Until the dawn of day,
My body is the prisoner,
My soul slips out to play.

A-tiptoe on the window-sill
He listens like a mouse,
The calling wind blows from the hill
And circles round the house.

Above the voices of the town
It whispers in the tree,
And brings the message of the Down :
'Tis there my soul would be.

Then while enchain'd my body lies
Like a dead man in grave,
Thither on trackless feet he hies,
On wings that make no wave.

The dawn comes out in cold gray sark
And finds him flitting there
Among the creatures of the dark,
Vixen and brock and hare.

O wild white face that's none of mine,
O eager eyes unknown,
What will you do with Proserpine,
And what shall I, alone ?

O flying feet, O naked sides,
O tresses flowing free,
And are you his that all day bides
So soberly in me ?

The sun streams up behind the hill
And strikes the window-pane ;
The empty land lies hot and still,
And I am I again.

Maurice Hewlett.

CXCIV

THE WASTE PLACES

As a naked man I go
  Through the desert sore afraid,
Holding up my head, although
  I am as frightened as a maid.

The crouching lion there I saw
  From barren rocks lift up his eye,
He parts the cactus with his paw,
  He stares at me as I go by.

He would follow on my trace
  If he knew I was afraid,
If he knew my hardy face
  Hides the terrors of a maid.

In the night he rises, and
  He stretches forth, he snuffs the air,
He roars and leaps along the sand,
  He creeps and watches everywhere.

His burning eyes, his eyes of bale,
  Through the darkness I can see ;
He lashes fiercely with his tail,
  He would love to spring at me.

I am the lion in his lair,
  I am the fear that frightens me,
I am the desert of despair,
  And the nights of agony.

Night or day, whate'er befall,
  I must walk that desert land,
Until I can dare to call
  The lion out to lick my hand.

James Stephens.

CXCV

BEWARE

I CLOSED my hands upon a moth
  And when I drew my palms apart,
Instead of dusty, broken wings,
  I found a bleeding human heart.

I crushed my foot upon a worm
  That had my garden for its goal,
But when I drew my foot aside
  I found a dying human soul.

Dora Sigerson Shorter.

CXCVI

REPROACH

Your grieving moonlight face looks down
  Through the forest of my fears,
Crowned with a spiny bramble-crown,
  Dew-dropped with evening tears.

Why do you spell " untrue, unkind,"
  Reproachful eyes, plaguing my sleep ?
I am not guilty in my mind
  Of aught would make you weep.

Untrue ? but how, what broken oath ?
  Unkind ? I know not even your name.
Unkind, untrue, you charge me both,
  Scalding my heart with shame.

The black trees shudder, dropping snow,
  The stars tumble and spin.
Speak, speak, or how may a child know
  His ancestral sin ?

Robert Graves.

CXCVII

Justus quidem tu es, Domine, si disputem tecum, etc.

THOU art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
With thee ; but, sir, so what I plead is just.
Why do sinners' ways prosper ? and why must
Disappointment all I endeavour end ?
Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,
How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost
Defeat, thwart me ? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust
Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,
Sir, life upon thy cause. See, banks and brakes
Now, leavèd how thick ! lacèd they are again
With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes
Them ; birds build—but not I build ; no, but strain,
Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.
Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

Gerard Hopkins.

CXCVIII

OUR LADY

MOTHER of God ! no lady thou :
Common woman of common earth !
OUR LADY ladies call thee now,
But Christ was never of gentle birth ;
A common man of the common earth.

For God's ways are not as our ways.
The noblest lady in the land
Would have given up half her days,
Would have cut off her right hand,
To bear the Child that was God of the land.

Never a lady did He choose,
Only a maid of low degree,
So humble she might not refuse
The carpenter of Galilee.
A daughter of the people, she.

Out she sang the song of her heart.
Never a lady so had sung.
She knew no letters, had no art;
To all mankind, in woman's tongue,
Hath Israelitish Mary sung.

And still for men to come she sings,
Nor shall her singing pass away.
"*He hath filled the hungry with good things*"—
Oh, listen, lords and ladies gay!—
"*And the rich He hath sent empty away.*"

Mary Coleridge.

CXCIX

THE LADY POVERTY

I MET her on the Umbrian hills,
Her hair unbound, her feet unshod:
As one whom secret glory fills
She walked, alone with God.

I met her in the city street :
Oh, changed was all her aspect then !
With heavy eyes and weary feet
She walked alone, with men.

Evelyn Underhill.

CC

HOLY POVERTY

Crowning Life so over-wise,
You have hid his tender eyes.
Dressing Life so over-fine,
You have starched his grace divine.
Ease his brows of irking crown,
He has smiles for all the town.
Doff his cloak and let him run,
He will lead where shines the sun.
Loose his mufflings, you shall prove,
Life's bare lips are lips of love.

Arthur Shearly Cripps.

CCI

BY THE STATUE OF KING CHARLES AT CHARING CROSS

Sombre and rich, the skies ;
Great glooms, and starry plains.
Gently the night wind sighs ;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me : and around
The saddest of all kings
Crowned, and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall :
Only the night wind glides :
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court ; and yet,
The stars his courtiers are :
Stars in their stations set ;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king :
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate :
The stars ; or those sad eyes ?
Which are more still and great :
Those brows ; or the dark skies ?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy :
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends :
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless? Nay:
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence? Yea:
And to the end of time.

Armoured he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom:
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ:
His soul was of the saints;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!
Men hunger for thy grace:
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps;
When all the cries are still:
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

Lionel Johnson.

CCII

TO THE FORGOTTEN DEAD

To the forgotten dead,
Come, let us drink in silence ere we part.
To every fervent yet resolvèd heart

That brought its tameless passion and its tears,
Renunciation and laborious years,
To lay the deep foundations of our race,
To rear its mighty ramparts overhead
And light its pinnacles with golden grace.
To the unhonoured dead.

To the forgotten dead,
Whose dauntless hands were stretched to grasp the rein
Of Fate and hurl into the void again
Her thunder-hoofèd horses, rushing blind
Earthward along the courses of the wind.
Among the stars, along the wind in vain
Their souls were scattered and their blood was shed,
And nothing, nothing of them doth remain.
To the thrice-perished dead.

Margaret L. Woods.

CCIII

A CHARM

Take of English earth as much
As either hand may rightly clutch.
In the taking of it breathe
Prayer for all who lie beneath.
Not the great nor well-bespoke,
But the mere uncounted folk

Of whose life and death is none
Report or lamentation.
  Lay that earth upon thy heart,
  And thy sickness shall depart !

It shall sweeten and make whole
Fevered breath and festered soul.
It shall mightily restrain
Over-busy hand and brain.
It shall ease thy mortal strife
'Gainst the immortal woe of life,
Till thyself, restored, shall prove
By what grace the Heavens do move.

Take of English flowers these—
Spring's full-facèd primroses,
Summer's wild wide-hearted rose,
Autumn's wall-flower of the close,
And, thy darkness to illume,
Winter's bee-thronged ivy-bloom.
Seek and serve them where they bide
From Candlemas to Christmas-tide,
  For these simples, used aright,
  Can restore a failing sight.

These shall cleanse and purify
Webbed and inward-turning eye ;
These shall show thee treasure hid,
Thy familiar fields amid ;
And reveal (which is thy need)
Every man a King indeed !

Rudyard Kipling.

CCIV

THE DEATH OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

Laden with spoil of the South, fulfilled with the glory of achievement,
And freshly crowned with never-dying fame,
Sweeping by shores where the names are the names of the victories of England,
Across the Bay the squadron homeward came.

Proudly they came, but their pride was the pomp of a funeral at midnight,
When dreader yet the lonely morrow looms;
Few are the words that are spoken, and faces are gaunt beneath the torchlight
That does but darken more the nodding plumes.

Low on the field of his fame, past hope lay the Admiral triumphant,
And fain to rest him after all his pain;
Yet for the love that he bore to his own land, ever unforgotten,
He prayed to see the western hills again.

Fainter than stars in a sky long gray with the coming of the daybreak,
Or sounds of night that fade when night is done,
So in the death-dawn faded the splendour and loud renown of warfare,
And life of all its longings kept but one.

" Oh ! to be there for an hour when the shade
draws in beside the hedgerows,
And falling apples wake the drowsy noon :
Oh ! for the hour when the elms grow sombre and
human in the twilight,
And gardens dream beneath the rising moon.

" Only to look once more on the land of the
memories of childhood,
Forgetting weary winds and barren foam :
Only to bid farewell to the combe and the orchard
and the moorland,
And sleep at last among the fields of home ! "

So he was silently praying, till now, when his
strength was ebbing faster,
The Lizard lay before them faintly blue ;
Now on the gleaming horizon the white cliffs
laughed along the coast-line,
And now the forelands took the shapes they knew.

There lay the Sound and the Island with green
leaves down beside the water,
The town, the Hoe, the masts with sunset fired—
Dreams ! ay, dreams of the dead ! for the great
heart faltered on the threshold,
And darkness took the land his soul desired.

Sir Henry Newbolt.

CCV

SUSSEX

God gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Beloved over all;
That, as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.

So one shall Baltic pines content,
As one some Surrey glade,
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament
Before Levuka's trade.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,
But gnarled and writhen thorn—
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,
And through the gaps revealed
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim
Blue goodness of the Weald.

Clean of officious fence or hedge,
  Half-wild and wholly tame,
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge
  As when the Romans came.
What sign of those that fought and died
  At shift of sword and sword ?
The barrow and the camp abide,
  The sunlight and the sward.

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
  All heavy-winged with brine,
Here lies above the folded crest
  The Channel's leaden line ;
And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
  And here, each warning each,
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
  Along the hidden beach.

We have no waters to delight
  Our broad and brookless vales—
Only the dewpond on the height
  Unfed, that never fails,
Whereby no tattered herbage tells
  Which way the season flies—
Only our close-bit thyme that smells
  Like dawn in Paradise.

Here through the strong unhampered days
  The tinkling silence thrills ;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
  The Lord who made the hills ;
But here the Old Gods guard their round,
  And, in her secret heart,

The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found
  Dreams, as she dwells, apart.

Though all the rest were all my share,
  With equal soul I'd see
Her nine-and-thirty sisters fair,
  Yet none more fair than she.
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
  And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
  Black Down and Beachy Head.

I will go out against the sun
  Where the rolled scarp retires,
And the Long Man of Wilmington
  Looks naked toward the shires ;
And east till doubling Rother crawls
  To find the fickle tide,
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,
  Our ports of stranded pride.

I will go north about the shaws
  And the deep ghylls that breed
Huge oaks of old, the which we hold
  No more than " Sussex weed " ;
Or South where windy Piddinghoe's
  Begilded dolphin veers,
And black beside wide-bankèd Ouse
  Lie down our Sussex steers.

So to the land our hearts we give
  Till the sure magic strike,

And Memory, Use, and Love make live
  Us and our fields alike—
That deeper than our speech and thought,
  Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
  Yearns to its fellow-clay.

God gives all men all earth to love,
  But since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
  Beloved over all.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
  The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
  Yea, Sussex by the sea!

Rudyard Kipling.

CCVI

A RUNNABLE STAG

When the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,
  And apples began to be golden-skinn'd,
We harbour'd a stag in the Priory coomb,
  And we feather'd his trail up-wind, up-wind,
  We feather'd his trail up-wind—
    A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
    A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
    Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
    A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,
And " Forwards " we heard the harbourer shout ;
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out,
From the underwood antler'd out
By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beam'd and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North ;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth,
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.
" Tally ho ! tally ho ! " and the hunt was up,
The tufters whipp'd and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on,
And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

" Let your gelding be : if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt ;

For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
On hunters accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The right, the runnable stag."

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far ;
His antler'd crest, his cloven hoof,
Brow, bay and tray and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more,
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds and all,
Of harbourer, hounds and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turn'd at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep
In a wonderful vision of sleep,

A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag in a jewell'd bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
And he open'd his nostrils wide again,
And he toss'd his branching antlers high
As he headed the hunt down the Charlock glen
As he raced down the echoing glen—
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,
Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag
That slept at last in a jewell'd bed
Under the sheltering ocean spread,
The stag, the runnable stag.

John Davidson.

CCVII

TO IRON-FOUNDERS AND OTHERS

When you destroy a blade of grass,
You poison England at her roots :

Remember no man's foot can pass
Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
Where your unnatural vapours creep :
Surely the living rocks shall die
When birds no rightful distance keep.

You have brought down the firmament,
And yet no heaven is more near ;
You shape huge deeds without event,
And half-made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels ; your vision is
Machines for making more machines.

O, you are busied in the night,
Preparing destinies of rust ;
Iron misused must turn to blight
And dwindle to a tetter'd crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone,
But plants that spring in ruins and shards
Attend until your dream is done :
I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm
Know not your loads piled on their soil ;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollow'd earth is crack'd,
And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lack'd,
The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
Last priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to wake grass in every field,
Chisels men's hands to magnify.

Gordon Bottomley.

CCVIII

GIBRALTAR

Seven weeks of sea, and twice seven days of storm
Upon the huge Atlantic, and once more
We ride into still water and the calm
Of a sweet evening, screen'd by either shore
Of Spain and Barbary. Our toils are o'er,
Our exile is accomplish'd. Once again
We look on Europe, mistress as of yore
Of the fair earth and of the hearts of men.
Ay, this is the famed rock which Hercules
And Goth and Moor bequeath'd us. At this door
England stands sentry. God! to hear the shrill
Sweet treble of her fifes upon the breeze,
And at the summons of the rock gun's roar
To see her redcoats marching from the hill!

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt.

CCIX

DRAKE'S DRUM

DRAKE he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' rüled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?)
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
" Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low ;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drumm'd them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
  Call him when ye sail to meet the foe ;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
  They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they
    found him long ago !

Sir Henry Newbolt.

CCX

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam ;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
    given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke.

CCXI

ST. GEORGE'S DAY—YPRES 1915

To fill the gap, to bear the brunt
With bayonet and with spade,
Four hundred to a four-mile front
Unbacked and undismayed—
What men are these, of what great race,
From what old shire or town,
That run with such goodwill to face
Death on a Flemish down?

Let be! they bind a broken line:
As men die, so die they.
Land of the free! their life was thine,
It is St. George's Day.

Yet say whose ardour bids them stand
At bay by yonder bank,
Where a boy's voice and a boy's hand
Close up the quivering rank,
Who under those all-shattering skies
Plays out his captain's part
With the last darkness in his eyes
And *Domum* in his heart?

Let be, let be! in yonder line
All names are burned away.
Land of his love! the fame be thine,
It is St. George's Day.

Sir Henry Newbolt.

CCXII

FULFILMENT

Was there love once ? I have forgotten her.
  Was there grief once ? grief yet is mine.
Other loves I have, men rough, but men who stir
  More grief, more joy, than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,
  Lined by the wind, burned by the sun ;
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,
  As whose children we are brethren : one.

And any moment may descend hot death
  To shatter limbs ! pulp, tear, blast
Beloved soldiers who love rough life and breath
  Not less for dying faithful to the last.

O the fading eyes, the grimed face turned bony,
  Oped mouth gushing, fallen head,
Lessening pressure of a hand shrunk, clammed,
    and stony !
  O sudden spasm, release of the dead !

Was there love once ? I have forgotten her.
  Was there grief once ? grief yet is mine.
O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,
  All, all, my joy, my grief, my love, are thine !

Robert Nichols.

CCXIII

THE DEAD

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead !
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away ; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth ; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age ; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow ! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage ;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again ;
And we have come into our heritage.

Rupert Brooke.

CCXIV

ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle ?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.

No mockeries for them ; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells ;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all ?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall ;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen.

CCXV

REBIRTH

1914–18.

If any God should say
"I will restore
The world her yesterday
Whole as before
My Judgments blasted it"—who would not lift
Heart, eye, and hand in passion o'er the gift ?

If any God should will
To wipe from mind
The memory of this ill
Which is mankind
In soul and substance now—who would not bless
Even to tears His loving-tenderness ?

If any God should give
  Us leave to fly
These present deaths we live,
  And safely die
In those lost lives we lived ere we were born—
What man but would not laugh the excuse to scorn ?

For we are what we are—
  So broke to blood
And the strict works of war—
  So long subdued
To sacrifice, that threadbare Death commands
Hardly observance at our busier hands.

Yet we were what we were,
  And, fashioned so,
It pleases us to stare
  At the far show
Of unbelievable years and shapes that flit,
In our own likeness, on the edge of it.

Rudyard Kipling.

CCXVI

IN TIME OF "THE BREAKING OF NATIONS"

Only a man harrowing clods
  In a slow silent walk
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
  Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame
From the heaps of couch-grass;
Yet this will go onward the same
Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight
Come whispering by:
War's annals will cloud into night
Ere their story die.

Thomas Hardy

CCXVII

EVERYONE SANG

EVERYONE suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on; and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away . . . O but everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon.

CCXVIII

THE LITTLE THINGS

THE little things, the little restless things,
The base and barren things, the things that spite
The day, and trail processions through the night
Of sad remembrances and questionings ;
The poverties, stupidities and stings,
The silted misery, the hovering blight ;
The things that block the paths of sound and sight ;
The things that snare one's thought and break its wings—

How shall we bear these ?—we who suffer so
The shattering sacrifice, the huge despair,
The terrors loosed like lightnings on the air,
To leave all nature blackened from that curse !
The big things are the enemies we know,
The little things the traitors. Which are worse ?

Gerald Gould.

CCXIX

THE HAWK

THOU dost not fly, thou art not perched,
The air is all around :
What is it that can keep thee set,
From falling to the ground ?
The concentration of thy mind
Supports thee in the air ;
As thou dost watch the small young birds,
With such a deadly care.

My mind has such a hawk as thou,
  It is an evil mood ;
It comes when there's no cause for grief,
  And on my joys doth brood.
Then do I see my life in parts ;
  The earth receives my bones,
The common air absorbs my mind—
  It knows not flowers from stones.

William Henry Davies.

CCXX

THE TREE

This is the living thing that cannot stir.
Where the seed chances there it roots and grows,
To suck what makes the lily or the fir
Out of the earth and from the air that blows.
Great power of Will that little thing the seed
Has, all alone in earth, to plan the tree,
And, though the mud oppresses, to succeed
And put out branches where the birds may be.
Then the wind blows it, but the bending boughs
Exult like billows, and their million green
Drink the all-living sunlight in carouse,
Like dainty harts where forest wells are clean,
While it, the central plant, which looks o'er miles,
Draws milk from the earth's breast, and sways, and smiles.

John Masefield.

CCXXI

O DREAMY, GLOOMY, FRIENDLY TREES

O DREAMY, gloomy, friendly Trees,
I came along your narrow track
To bring my gifts unto your knees
And gifts did you give back ;
For when I brought this heart that burns—
These thoughts that bitterly repine—
And laid them here among the ferns
And the hum of boughs divine,
Ye, vastest breathers of the air,
Shook down with slow and mighty poise
Your coolness on the human care,
Your wonder on its toys,
Your greenness on the heart's despair,
Your darkness on its noise.

Herbert Trench.

CCXXII

THE CELL

WHEN from the hush of this cool wood
I go, Lord, to the noisy mart,
Give me among the multitude,
I pray, a lonely heart.

Yea, build in me a secret cell
Where quietness shall be a song :
In that green solitude I'll dwell,
And praise Thee all day long.

George Rostrevor Hamilton.

CCXXIII

AMENDS TO NATURE

I HAVE loved colours, and not flowers ;
Their motion, not the swallow's wings ;
And wasted more than half my hours
Without the comradeship of things.

How is it, now, that I can see,
With love and wonder and delight,
The children of the hedge and tree,
The little lords of day and night ?

How is it that I see the roads,
No longer with usurping eyes,
A twilight meeting-place for toads,
A mid-day mart for butterflies ?

I feel, in every midge that hums,
Life, fugitive and infinite,
And suddenly the world becomes
A part of me and I of it.

Arthur Symons.

CCXXIV

A THOUGHT

WHEN I look into a glass,
Myself's my only care ;
But I look into a pool
For all the wonders there.

When I look into a glass,
I see a fool :
But I see a wise man
When I look into a pool.

William Henry Davies.

CCXXV

INITIATION

The wind has fallen asleep ; the bough that tost
Is quiet ; the warm sun's gone ; the wide light
Sinks and is almost lost ;
Yet the April day glows on within my mind
Happy as the white buds in the blue air,
A thousand buds that shone on waves of wind.
Now evening leads me wooingly apart.
The young wood draws me down these shelving ways
Deeper, as if it drew me to its heart.

What stills my spirit ? What awaits me here ?
So motionless the budded hazels spring,
So shadowy and so near !
My feet make not a sound upon this moss,—
Greenest gloom, scented with cold primroses.
A ripple, shy as almost to be mute,
Secretly wanders among further trees ;
Else the clear evening brims with loneliness,
With stillness luminous and absolute.

The pause between sunsetting and moonrise
Exhales a strangeness. It melts out in dream
The experience of the wise.
This purity of sharpened sweet spring smells
Comes like a memory lost since I was born.
My own heart changes into mystery !
There is some presence nears through all these spells
Out of the darkened bosom of the earth :
Not I the leaf, but the leaf touches me.

Who seeks me ? What shy lover, whose approach
Makes spiritual the white flowers on the thorn ?
Who seems to breathe up round me,—perfume strange !—
June and its bloom unborn ?
Shy as a virgin passion is the spring !
I could have Time cease now, so there should live
This blossom in the stillness of my heart,—
Earth's earth, yet immaterial as a sense
Enriched to understand, love, hope, forgive.

Now, now, if ever, could the spirit catch,
Beyond the ear's range, thrills of airy sound.
I tremble, as at the lifting of a latch.
Am I not found ?
This magical clear moment in the dusk
Is like a crystal dewy-brimming bowl
Imperilled upon lifting hands : I dread
The breathing of the shadow that shall spill
This wonder, and with it my very soul.

A dead bough cracks under my foot ! The charm
Breaks ; I am I now, in a gloom aware
Of furtive, flitting wing, and hunted eyes,
And furry feet a-scare.
Fear, it is fear exiles us each apart ;
We are all bound and prisoned in our fear ;
From the dark shadow of our own selves we flee.
Ah, but that moment, open-eyed, erect,
I had stept out of all fear, and was free.

How sweet it was in youth's shy giving-time
Finding the sudden friend, whose thoughts ran out
With yours in natural chime ;
Who knew, before speech, what the lips would tell !
No need to excuse, to hide or to defend
From him, in whom your dearest thought shone
new
And not a fancy stirred for him in vain.
So was it, as with a so perfect friend,
In that rare moment I have lost again.

But lo, a whiteness risen beyond the hill :
The moon-dawn ! A late bird sings somewhere ;
hark
The long, low, loitering trill !
Like water-drops it falls into the dark.
The earth-sweetness holds me in its fragrant mesh.
Oh, though I know that I am bound afar,
Yet, where the grass is, there I also grew.
Blood knows more than the brain. Am I perhaps
Most true to earth when I seem most untrue ?

Laurence Binyon.

CCXXVI

THE NEW HOUSE

Now first, as I shut the door,
I was alone
In the new house ; and the wind
Began to moan.

Old at once was the house,
And I was old ;
My ears were teased with the dread
Of what was foretold ;

Nights of storm, days of mist, without end ;
Sad days when the sun
Shone in vain : old griefs and griefs
Not yet begun.

All was foretold me ; naught
Could I foresee ;
But I learnt how the wind would sound
After these things should be.

Edward Thomas.

CCXXVII

WINTER NIGHTFALL

The old yellow stucco
Of the time of the Regent
Is flaking and peeling :
The rows of square windows
In the straight yellow building
Are empty and still ;

And the dusty dark evergreens
Guarding the wicket
Are draped with wet cobwebs,
And above this poor wilderness
Toneless and sombre
Is the flat of the hill.

They said that a colonel
Who long ago died here
Was the last one to live here:
An old retired colonel,
Some Fraser or Murray,
I don't know his name;
Death came here and summoned him,
And the shells of him vanished
Beyond all speculation;
And silence resumed here,
Silence and emptiness,
And nobody came.

Was it wet when he lived here,
Were the skies dun and hurrying,
Was the rain so irresolute?
Did he watch the night coming,
Did he shiver at nightfall
Before he was dead?
Did the wind go so creepily,
Chilly and puffing,
With drops of cold rain in it?
Was the hill's lifted shoulder
So lowering and menacing,
So dark and so dread?

Did he turn through his doorway
And go to his study,
And light many candles ?
And fold in the shutters,
And heap up the fireplace
To fight off the damps ?
And muse on his boyhood,
And wonder if India
Ever was real ?
And shut out the loneliness
With pig-sticking memoirs
And collections of stamps ?

Perhaps. But he's gone now,
He and his furniture
Dispersed now for ever ;
And the last of his trophies,
Antlers and photographs,
Heaven knows where.
And there's grass in his gateway,
Grass on his footpath,
Grass on his doorstep ;
The garden's grown over,
The well-chain is broken,
The windows are bare.

And I leave him behind me,
For the straggling, discoloured
Rags of the daylight,
And hills and stone walls
And a rick long forgotten
Of blackening hay :

The road pale and sticky,
And cart-ruts and nail-marks,
And wind-ruffled puddles,
And the slop of my footsteps
In this desolate country's
Cadaverous clay.

J. C. Squire

CCXXVIII

THE BARN

Rain-sunken roof, grown green and thin
For sparrows' nests and starlings' nests ;
Dishevelled eaves ; unwieldy doors,
Cracked rusty pump, and oaken floors,
And idly-pencilled names and jests
Upon the posts within.

The light pales at the spider's lust,
The wind tangs through the shattered pane :
An empty hop-poke spreads across
The gaping frame to mend the loss
And keeps out sun as well as rain,
Mildewed with clammy dust.

The smell of apples stored in hay
And homely cattle-cake is there.
Use and disuse have come to terms,
The walls are hollowed out by worms,
But men's feet keep the mid-floor bare
And free from worse decay.

All merry noise of hens astir
Or sparrows squabbling on the roof
Comes to the barn's broad open door ;
You hear upon the stable floor
Old hungry Dapple strike his hoof,
And the blue fan-tail's whir.

The barn is old, and very old,
But not a place of spectral fear.
Cobwebs and dust and speckling sun
Come to old buildings every one.
Long since they made their dwelling here,
And here you may behold

Nothing but simple wane and change ;
Your tread will wake no ghost, your voice
Will fall on silence undeterred.
No phantom wailing will be heard,
Only the farm's blithe cheerful noise ;
The barn is old, not strange.

Edmund Blunden.

CCXXIX

ON A DEAD CHILD

Perfect little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair !
Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou ;—alas ! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy ; to be
Thy father's pride ;—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength
make stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond ;
Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of
beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and
holds it :
But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heart-
breaking and stiff ;
Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that
enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing—
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little
bed !—
Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet ! doth the change content thee ?—Death,
whither hath he taken thee ?
To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster
of this ?
The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm
thee and awaken thee ?

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and have heard of, fail us.

Robert Bridges.

CCXXX

BURY HER AT EVEN

Bury her at even
That the stars may shine
Soon above her,
And the dews of twilight cover:
Bury her at even
Ye that love her.

Bury her at even
In the wind's decline;
Night receive her
Where no voice can ever grieve her!
Bury her at even,
And then leave her!

Michael Field.

CCXXXI

GREAT THINGS

Sweet cyder is a great thing,
A great thing to me,
Spinning down to Weymouth town
By Ridgway thirstily,

And maid and mistress summoning
Who tend the hostelry :
O cyder is a great thing,
A great thing to me !

The dance it is a great thing,
A great thing to me,
With candles lit and partners fit
For night-long revelry ;
And going home when day-dawning
Peeps pale upon the lea :
O dancing is a great thing,
A great thing to me !

Love is, yea, a great thing,
A great thing to me,
When, having drawn across the lawn
In darkness silently,
A figure flits like one a-wing
Out from the nearest tree :
O love is, yes, a great thing,
A great thing to me !

Will these be always great things,
Great things to me ? . . .
Let it befall that One will call,
" Soul, I have need of thee " :
What then ? Joy-jaunts, impassioned flings,
Love, and its ecstasy,
Will always have been great things,
Great things to me !

Thomas Hardy.

CCXXXII

THE OXEN

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If some one said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

Thomas Hardy.

CCXXXIII

NOEL

A frosty Christmas eve
when the stars were shining
Fared I forth alone
where westward falls the hill,

And from many a village
in the water'd valley
Distant music reach'd me,
peals of bells a-ringing:
The constellated sounds
ran sprinkling on earth's floor
As the dark vault above
with stars was spangled o'er.

Then sped my thought to keep
that first Christmas of all
When the shepherds watching
by their folds ere the dawn
Heard music in the fields
and marveling could not tell
Whether it were angels
or the bright stars singing.

Now blessed be the tow'rs
that crown England so fair,
That stand up strong in prayer
unto God for our souls:
Blessed be their founders
(sed I) an' our country folk
Who are ringing for Christ
in the belfries to-night
With arms lifted to clutch
the rattling ropes that race
Into the dark above
and the mad romping din.

But to me heard afar
it was heav'nly music,
Angels' song comforting
as the comfort of Christ
When he spake tenderly
to his sorrowful flock :
The old words came to me
by the riches of time
Mellow'd and transfigured
as I stood on the hill
Heark'ning in the aspect
of th' eternal silence.

Robert Bridges.

CCXXXIV

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie,
Glad did I live and gladly die
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :
Here he lies where he longed to be ;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

CCXXXV

SACRAMENTUM SUPREMUM

Ye that with me have fought and failed and fought
To the last desperate trench of battle's crest,
Not yet to sleep, not yet; our work is nought;
On that last trench the fate of all may rest.
Draw near, my friends; and let your thoughts be high;
Great hearts are glad when it is time to give;
Life is no life to him that dares not die,
And death no death to him that dares to live.

Draw near together; none be last or first;
We are no longer names, but one desire;
With the same burning of the soul we thirst,
And the same wine to-night shall quench our fire.
Drink! to our fathers who begot us men,
To the dead voices that are never dumb;
Then to the land of all our loves, and then
To the long parting, and the age to come.

Sir Henry Newbolt.

CCXXXVI

THE PLOUGHER

Sunset and silence! A man: around him earth savage, earth broken;
Beside him two horses—a plough!

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn,
man there in the sunset,
And the Plough that is twin to the Sword, that is
founder of Cities!

"Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker!
Can'st hear? There are ages between us.
Is it praying you are as you stand there alone in
the sunset?

"Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you,
earth-child and earth-master?
Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or
Dana?

"Yet why give thought to gods? Has Pan led
your brutes where they stumble?
Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan
put hands to your plough?

"What matter your foolish reply! O man,
standing lone and bowed earthward,
Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to
the night-giving God."

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend
with the savage;
The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's
breadth only above them.

A head's breadth? Ay, but therein is hell's
depth, and the height up to heaven,
And the thrones of the gods and their halls, their
chariots, purples, and splendours.

Padraic Colum.

CCXXXVII

TRUTH

THE hero first thought it—
To him 'twas a deed :
To those who retaught it,
A chain on their speed.

The fire that we kindled,
A beacon by night,
When darkness has dwindled
Grows pale in the light.

For life has no glory
Stays long in one dwelling,
And time has no story
That's true twice in telling.

And only the teaching
That never was spoken
Is worthy thy reaching,
The fountain unbroken.

George Russell (*A. E.*).

CCXXXVIII

EPILOGUE

WHAT shall we do for Love these days ?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,

And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love ?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire ?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipt before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furl'd
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing :
All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee ;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight ;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.
For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing :
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so
All the wondering world might know

The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
  Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices ; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind ;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars, and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight ;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame ;

Such an immortal passion
Quivered among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees ;
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury,—
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumour cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is ;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were ;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare ;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt

Into the water ; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipt
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.
So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud,—
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed,—
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly
Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes ;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt ;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skill'd stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was ?
How could such a wonder pass ?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pusht down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.

But we have raised it up again !
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are ;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazements of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproacht and perfect hour
Within the splendours of Love's power.

Lascelles Abercrombie.

CCXXXIX

THE RABBI'S SONG

If Thought can reach to Heaven,
  On Heaven let it dwell,
For fear thy Thought be given
  Like power to reach to Hell.
For fear the desolation
  And darkness of thy mind
Perplex an habitation
  Which thou hast left behind.

Let nothing linger after—
  No whimpering ghost remain,
In wall, or beam, or rafter,
  Of any hate or pain.
Cleanse and call home thy spirit,
  Deny her leave to cast,
On aught thy heirs inherit,
  The shadow of her past.

For think, in all thy sadness,
  What road our griefs may take ;
Whose brain reflect our madness,
  Or whom our terrors shake.
For think, lest any languish
  By cause of thy distress—
The arrows of our anguish
  Fly farther than we guess.

Our lives, our tears, as water,
  Are spilled upon the ground ;
God giveth no man quarter,
  Yet God a means hath found,
Though faith and hope have vanished,
  And even love grows dim—
A means whereby His banished
  Be not expelled from Him.

Rudyard Kipling.

CCXL

" IN NO STRANGE LAND "

O WORLD invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee !

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there ?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars !—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places ;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry ;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems ;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Genesareth, but Thames !

Francis Thompson.

CCXLI

THE SONG OF HONOUR

I CLIMBED a hill as light fell short,
And rooks came home in scramble sort,
And filled the trees and flapped and fought
And sang themselves to sleep ;
An owl from nowhere with no sound
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,
I heard him calling half-way round,
Holloing loud and deep ;

A pair of stars, faint pins of light,
Then many a star, sailed into sight,
And all the stars, the flower of night,
Were round me at a leap ;
To tell how still the valleys lay
I heard a watchdog miles away,
And bells of distant sheep.

I heard no more of bird or bell.
The mastiff in a slumber fell,
I stared into the sky,
As wondering men have always done
Since beauty and the stars were one,
Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,
Save me and me alone ;
So pure and wide that silence was
I feared to bend a blade of grass,
And there I stood like stone.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—
Ah ! some wild lovesick singing bird
Woke singing in the trees ?
The nightingale and babble-wren
Were in the English greenwood then,
And you heard one of these ?

The babble-wren and nightingale
Sang in the Abyssinian vale
That season of the year !
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain,
I heard them both again, again,

As sharp and sweet and clear
As if the Abyssinian tree
Had thrust a bough across the sea,
Had thrust a bough across to me
With music for my ear !

I heard them both, and oh ! I heard
The song of every singing bird
That sings beneath the sky,
And with the song of lark and wren
The song of mountains, moths and men
And seas and rainbows vie !

I heard the universal choir,
The Sons of Light exalt their Sire
With universal song,
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,
Her million times ten million throats
Exalt Him loud and long,
And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace
From every part and every place
Within the shining of His face,
The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of being sound
From every well of honour found
In human sense and soul :
The song of poets when they write
The testament of Beautysprite
Upon a flying scroll,
The song of painters when they take
A burning brush for Beauty's sake
And limn her features whole—

The song of men divinely wise
Who look and see in starry skies
Not stars so much as robins' eyes,
And when these pale away
Hear flocks of shiny pleiades
Among the plums and apple trees
Sing in the summer day—

The song of all both high and low
To some blest vision true,
The song of beggars when they throw
The crust of pity all men owe
To hungry sparrows in the snow,
Old beggars hungry too—
The song of kings of kingdoms when
They rise above their fortune Men,
And crown themselves anew—

The song of courage, heart and will
And gladness in a fight,
Of men who face a hopeless hill
With sparking and delight,
The bells and bells of song that ring
Round banners of a cause or king
From armies bleeding white—

The song of sailors every one
When monstrous tide and tempest run
At ships like bulls at red,
When stately ships are twirled and spun
Like whipping tops and help there's none
And mighty ships ten thousand ton
Go down like lumps of lead—

And song of fighters stern as they
At odds with fortune night and day,
Crammed up in cities grim and grey
As thick as bees in hives,
Hosannas of a lowly throng
Who sing unconscious of their song,
Whose lips are in their lives—

And song of some at holy war
With spells and ghouls more dread by far
Than deadly seas and cities are
Or hordes of quarrelling kings—
The song of fighters great and small,
The song of pretty fighters all
And high heroic things—

The song of lovers—who knows how
Twitched up from place and time
Upon a sigh, a blush, a vow,
A curve or hue of cheek or brow,
Borne up and off from here and now
Into the void sublime!

And crying loves and passions still
In every key from soft to shrill
And numbers never done,
Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,
And loves like Ruth's of old no end,
And intermission none—

And burst on burst for beauty and
For numbers not behind,
From men whose love of motherland
Is like a dog's for one dear hand,

Sole, selfless, boundless, blind—
And song of some with hearts beside
For men and sorrows far and wide,
Who watch the world with pity and pride
And warm to all mankind—

And endless joyous music rise
From children at their play,
And endless soaring lullabies
From happy, happy mothers' eyes,
And answering crows and baby-cries,
How many who shall say !
And many a song as wondrous well
With pangs and sweets intolerable
From lonely hearths too grey to tell,
God knows how utter grey !
And song from many a house of care
When pain has forced a footing there
And there's a Darkness on the stair
Will not be turned away—
And song—that song whose singers come
With old kind tales of pity from
The Great Compassion's lips,
That make the bells of Heaven to peal
Round pillows frosty with the feel
Of Death's cold finger tips—

The song of men all sorts and kinds,
As many tempers, moods and minds
As leaves are on a tree,
As many faiths and castes and creeds,
As many human bloods and breeds,
As in the world may be ;

The song of each and all who gaze
On Beauty in her naked blaze,
Or see her dimly in a haze,
Or get her light in fitful rays
And tiniest needles even,
The song of all not wholly dark,
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark
Too deep for groping Heaven—
And alleluias sweet and clear
And wild with beauty men mishear,
From choirs of song as near and dear
To Paradise as they,
The everlasting pipe and flute
Of wind and sea and bird and brute,
And lips deaf men imagine mute
In wood and stone and clay :

The music of a lion strong
That shakes a hill a whole night long,
A hill as loud as he,
The twitter of a mouse among
Melodious greenery,
The ruby's and the rainbow's song,
The nightingale's—all three,
The song of life that wells and flows
From every leopard, lark and rose
And everything that gleams or goes
Lack-lustre in the sea.

I heard it all, each, every note
Of every lung and tongue and throat,
Ay, every rhythm and rhyme
Of everything that lives and loves

And upward, ever upward moves
From lowly to sublime !
Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,
I heard them lift their lyric might
With each and every chanting sprite
That lit the sky that wondrous night
As far as eye could climb !

I heard it all, I heard the whole
Harmonious hymn of being roll
Up through the chapel of my soul
And at the altar die,
And in the awful quiet then
Myself I heard, Amen, Amen,
Amen I heard me cry !
I heard it all and then although
I caught my flying senses, Oh,
A dizzy man was I !
I stood and stared ; the sky was lit,
The sky was stars all over it,
I stood, I knew not why,
Without a wish, without a will,
I stood upon that silent hill
And stared into the sky until
My eyes were blind with stars and still
I stared into the sky.

Ralph Hodgson.

SUMMARY OF BOOK II

(The Post-Victorians)

We stand too near to the poetry of our own age to form any secure estimate of it. But some salient characteristics can hardly fail to attract our attention. A reaction from the disciplined perfection of the great Victorians, Tennyson, Arnold and Swinburne, was inevitable. Ours has been an age of restless experiment, of seeking after new experience, new expression, new metrical effects. Sometimes, as with the Laureate, the experiments have been fortified with the finest scholarship and intimate knowledge of great literature ; at other times, as in some attempts at " free verse ", there have been signs of impatience with tradition and even of impatience with the taking of pains. In general, the modern lyric poet has regarded the complete poem as the unit and aimed at the total effect ; there is gain in this, but sometimes loss also ; as compared with the Victorian, the present age is less rich in great single lines.

In many directions there has been notable achievement. The poetry of patriotism, of the love of the homeland and the larger Britain beyond

the seas, of the sea itself and its defenders, has received more splendid additions than at any time since Shakespeare. Our poets have also glorified the romance of adventure in remote lands and waters, and captured the colour and magic of the East (CLVI., CLX.). They have widened the bounds of beauty, taught us to find it in "wildness and wet" (CXLIV.) and in many places where we might not have looked for it (CXLI.). They have won a closer sympathy with Nature, in which Emily Brontë perhaps came nearer to them than Wordsworth; for it has less of his serenity than of a troubled sense, something like St. Paul's, of "all creation groaning and travailing together in pain". So we find in them a deep and moving sympathy with woods (CXXX., CCXXI.) and the ancient earth (CCIII.), with wild creatures (CCXXV.), even with fishes (CLV.), with primitive man (CCXXXVI.), with houses and their ghosts (CLIII., CCXXVII.). They explore the human heart (CXCIV.), and they give utterance, not less truly than Hebrew prophet and psalmist of old, to the deepest prayers and aspirations of the Spirit of Man (CXCII., CCXXXIX.-CCXLI.).

J. H. F.

NOTES

Poems in this collection are referred to by Roman numerals simply ; poems in Palgrave (the authorised edition, not incomplete reprints) by the letters G.T. and ordinary numerals. O.B.V. = *Oxford Book of Verse.*

Notes by Mr. Binyon are in inverted commas, followed by the initial (B.).

Metre.—A few of the classical names for metrical feet, familiar to nearly all English poets, are used in these notes for convenience ; but their use does not imply that English verse (outside some rare experiments) is quantitative : syllables marked long (–) are stressed syllables, syllables marked short (⏑) are unstressed.

CXVII. In this lyric Mr. ROBERT BRIDGES shows himself a true successor of that other Poet Laureate who wrote that " the Poet in a golden clime was born, . . . Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn, The love of love ".

CXVIII. The beauty of the beloved has made an image of an ideally beautiful world upon which all ugliness, discord or decay, in the real world strikes painfully. *Metre.*—Lines of 6 accents, but with a cæsura (break) in the middle, so that each line could be written as 2 lines of 3 accents each.

Mr. W. B. YEATS, born in Dublin, 1865, has largely found the inspiration for his romantic and beautiful poetry in Irish legends.

CXIX. One of the loveliest of modern lyrics, with echoes of Wordsworth in it, especially of the Lucy and the Matthew poems, but with an even greater poignancy, the utterance of a heart and life which never attained Wordsworth's serenity. In the last stanza the poet's ecstasy of delight in the realisation of perfect beauty and perfect innocence is drowned in the intolerable anguish of his feeling that the joy is no sooner given than it is snatched away.

FRANCIS THOMPSON was born in Preston, 1859, the son of a doctor, went to the Roman Catholic college of Ushaw, near Durham, and afterwards to Owen's College, Manchester, as a medical student. He never completed his course, and he had drifted into the direst poverty and ill-health in London, when he was rescued by Wilfrid and Alice Meynell, the kind friends to whom, and to whose children, he dedicated many poems. He died in hospital in 1907 at the age of 48. Of **Storrington** (st. 6) Wilfrid Meynell has finely said: "That beautiful Sussex village has now its fixed place on the map of English literature; for there it was that Francis Thompson discovered his possibilities as a poet".

CXX. The Miracle in Nature is the persistence with which all things pursue some purpose of their being in spite of the inevitable failure that lies ahead. St. 3. The sea is not 'purposeless' (CIII.), though its purpose is 'dark' (XLI.). St. 5 (last line). "The reference is to Chaucer's *Prioress' Tale* of the child, murdered by Jews, who lying dead yet continued to sing the hymn *O Alma Redemptoris Mater*" (B.). *Metre.*—Four accents in each line of the stanza, except the fourth which has only two. The last line of the poem has its due number of four accents, if read slowly with stresses on both the first two monosyllables.

Mr. WALTER DE LA MARE has attempted, both in

prose and verse, the essentially poetic task of capturing and expressing thoughts and imaginations which elude the logical reasoner but are not idle, though they may be shadowy.

CXXI. The poetry of the bodily senses. The external world sends its embassies to the senses; creation needs for its completion the percipient sense—of taste, smell, colour, sound, heat and cold. St. 3, **inexplicit**: undetermined, till the eye receives them and gives them definiteness.

ALICE MEYNELL (1850–1922), wife of Wilfrid Meynell (her maiden name was Thompson, and she was sister of Lady Butler, the battle-painter), wrote lyric poetry of a delicate charm and subtle thoughtfulness as well as some critical essays.

CXXII. The beauty, sweetness and fragility of the body, and its relation to the soul, are all wonderfully represented in this brief strain. For the legend of the phœnix, see note on 1.

CXXIII. The poets have often celebrated in verse the glory and the pathos of their lot—as in O'Shaughnessy's "We are the music-makers" (O.B.V. 828), or Wordsworth's *Resolution and Independence*: but here one who, modestly or despondently, imagines that poetic utterance is denied to him laments that the feelings of his heart find no expression and therefore no relief. St. 2, **our love's might**: our mighty love.

C. H. SORLEY, "killed in action, October 1915, at the age of twenty, was already a poet of high promise and original power". He was a son of Professor W. R. Sorley, of Cambridge, and was educated at Marlborough. His best-known poem is *The Song of the Ungirt Runners*.

CXXIV. Aptly chosen as a pendant to the preceding, since it explains the relief given to pent-up feelings by the writing of poetry.

W. H. DAVIES was born at Newport, Monmouthshire, in 1870. He tramped through America and related his experiences in *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*. His poetry shows a delicate sympathy with Nature.

CXXV. Those we love are never so near to us, their dearness to us is never so fully realised, as in the moment after we have lost them. This truth of our human affections is recalled by the emotional experience of a sunset witnessed beside an ebbing sea. **flaws**: cracks. **surrendered**: given up by us, as it ebbs away.

MICHAEL FIELD " was the pseudonym adopted by Katharine Harris Bradley and Edith Emma Cooper. They were aunt and niece, and present a unique example of poetic collaboration. Their chief work is a series of poetic plays " (B.).

CXXVI. Silence is the music of the spheres : faint as is its voice, we are conscious that it pervades the universe. Silence is " goddess of the truthful face ", for it is only away from clamour that we can see things as they are or yield ourselves to the healing influence of natural beauty.

Mr. T. STURGE MOORE first won fame by *The Vinedresser and other Poems*, 1899. He is an engraver and art-critic as well as poet.

CXXVII. A great succession of English poets—Sidney, Milton, Keats, Arnold, Swinburne among them—have paid tribute to the nightingale. After them all Mr. Bridges finds something fresh and beautiful to say. The nightingale's song does not express perfection attained, but the yearning for unattainable perfection. *Metre.*—Five accents in lines 1, 2, 5 of each stanza ; six accents in line 4 ; two accents in lines 3 and 6. The short lines (3 and 6) suggest the " dying cadence ", as the long fourth line recalls the bird's sustained flight of song.

CXXVIII. A meditation on the brevity of human kingdoms, in the spirit of Sir Walter Raleigh's apostrophe to Death (in the *History of the World*). No modern lyric has more completely caught the feeling and the manner of the seventeenth century; the second stanza achieves the miracle of writing about daffodils as Herrick might have done, without copying what he actually did write (G.T. 140).

CXXIX. Everything in which man's soul finds meaning shares the greatness of that soul. Hieroglyphic scrolls, the utterance of the name of God, the spells worked by sacred chants, all imply and partake of the vastness of the whole. And the least things in Nature share it, the worm having its relation to the infinity of the Universe. The greatness of the works of man is only the expression of the greatness of his thought.

CXXX-CXXXI. That sense of the antiquity of man, and the still greater antiquity of the earth from which he draws his sustenance, which is perhaps the strongest impression we carry away from the reading of Mr. Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native*, is exquisitely expressed in these two poems. They could hardly have been written in any previous age; for it is only through such studies as Frazer's *Golden Bough* that we have come to realise the full meaning of heredity. We are the heirs of all the ages, not merely because the poetry of the past is ours to read, but because the thoughts of past generations are in our blood. It is a solemnising thought—an immortality that presses heavily. *Metre* of CXXX.—Three accents in the odd, two in the even lines. The first line of each stanza should be read slowly (Véry | óld are | the wóods | ; so, too, the spondaic lines (ōh, nō′ | mān knōws′: Rōves bāck′ | thĕ rōse.)

CXXXII. A Hymn of Creation—somewhat in the spirit of the famous Invocation in Bk. I. of Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*. St. 3, **The cosmic descant**: music of the spheres. **temporal lord of life**: the sun which determines the seasons. St. 4, **Vestal fire**: a pure thin flame, like that on Vesta's hearth, tended by the vestal virgins. St. 5-7, Man's mortality shows him a child of earth, but in his soul is the spark from heaven. Yet we cannot, like the ancients, hail the sun as the All-Father, for we know that the Sun himself is mortal, only 'a word' of 'the speech' of the Godhead which includes the whole timeless Universe. *Metre*.—Three accents in each line except the 7th, which has four. The rhythm begins as iambic, but as the song proceeds the introduction of anapæsts (⏑⏑–) quickens the pace and so celebrates the triumph of the Sun. This is one of the few contemporary poems from which a phrase has already passed into current speech—"Better than wise, being fair".

Sir WILLIAM WATSON (*b*. 1858) is best known for his reflective and critical poetry (*Wordsworth's Grave*, and poems on Arnold and Tennyson, *In Laleham Churchyard* and *Lacrimae Musarum*).

CXXXIII. The idea, adopted by Mr. Hardy in these moving elegiac stanzas, that places are haunted by the spirits of those who frequented them in life, is common in all ages. Cp. XXXV., *Mariana*, and CLIII., *The Listeners*.

Though far more widely known as the author of the "Wessex Novels", Mr. THOMAS HARDY (*b*. 1840) wrote poetry even before he wrote prose fiction, and has in later life definitely returned to his early love. His epic-drama of the Napoleonic wars, *The Dynasts*, has been followed by several volumes of lyric and narrative verse.

CXXXIV. How imagination and memory can

lighten up a scene in Nature, and how a sudden darkness falls upon the scene if the light of memory be taken away, is wonderfully told in the chapter on the Lamp of Memory in Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. So here the music in the heart lends enchantment to the scene in the wood, and change of mood destroys the charm and brings a sense of weariness and age. St. 2. **Widdershins**: turning away from the sun, practised as a magical rite. *Metre*.—Four accents in each line. Normally the line is iambic or anapæstic: A sóng | of Enchánt |-ment I sáng | me thére |. ⏑⏑ Twí | light cáme | ⏑⏑ sí | lence cáme | should be read slowly, with pauses, to occupy the same time as the other lines.

CXXXV. Wordsworth extolled the power of "one impulse from a vernal wood": we have felt "the spell of a wood" in CXXXIV., and we shall meet it again in CCXXI., CCXXII., CCXXV.: it is present also in Mr. Sturge Moore's charming allegory. The soul that self-forgetfully gives itself up to thoughts of kindness is like the wood that turns even winter frosts to beauty, or like the sunshine which gives courage and strength to the soaring lark.

CXXXVI. An appropriate pendant to CXXXV., for it tells of the value to others of a heart full of gladness.

CXXXVII.-VIII. The joy of birds, as well as of men, brings encouragement to the human heart. Mr. Hardy is more apt to find sorrow, pain and cruelty in external Nature than joy or kindness, and the sombre landscape of CXXXVII. is characteristic; but the thrush's song makes a delightful contrast. Mr. de la Mare's dainty poem is "a thing of light", like the linnet he describes twinkling and twittering and vanishing in song. Notice the subtle alliteration and modulation of vowel sounds. Compare

with these two poems Meredith's noble *Lark Ascending*.

CXXXIX. Yet the birds are merely " pretty pictures of delight " : it is man alone who can " in heart and mind ascend " into the heavens (*Collect for Ascension Day*) : " in our life alone does Nature live " (Coleridge). Metrically this sonnet is very interesting : the anapæsts so freely substituted for iambs, and the ingeniously distributed pauses, give the effect of wings now beating up against the wind, now balanced in still air. L. 9, Poor sím | ple bírds, | foólish | bírds ! then | I crý. L. 12, Ye are nót | what ye áre, | but rá | ther, súm'd | in a wórd.

CXL. Few modern poets have drawn such exquisite parables from Nature as Mr. Davies. We may compare Browning's *James Lee's Wife* (Section 5, " On the Cliff ").

CXLI. R. L. STEVENSON (1850–94), fully valued or even overvalued as a writer of English prose, has not yet received all the recognition due to him as a poet. His *Child's Garden of Verse* was something new in kind and as epoch-making as Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. In *The House Beautiful* he uses the octosyllabic couplet in a way that recalls Milton's *L'Allegro* and Marvell's *Song of the Emigrants in Bermuda* (G. T. 146), yet with a strongly individual note.

CXLII. Modern poetry, like modern painting, is always teaching us to find beauty where we might easily fail to notice it. How much of the beauty of the world is due to its astonishing variety ! Cp. Rupert Brooke, *The Great Lover*. L. 4, **fresh-firecoal** : with the glow of burning coal, of the chestnut stripped of its husk ; cp. CLXI., st. 8. L. 5, **plotted and pieced** : divided into plots, patterned. **L. 7, counter** : unexpected, contrary to

type. **spare**: with no superfluous ornament, yet beautiful with a sort of athletic spareness. L. 10, **past change**: " the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning " (*St. James*, i. 17).

GERARD M. HOPKINS (1844–89) was a Jesuit Father. His poems " belong strictly to Book I., but were not published till 1918. Original to the point of eccentricity, he was in metre and rhythm a pioneer, to whom later verse is indirectly indebted " (B.).

CXLIII. Here the bird gives joy, not by its song but by its beauty. The moral of this, as of the preceding poem, is that of R. Browning's *Guardian-Angel*:

> O world, as God has made it, all is beauty;
> And knowing that is love, and love is duty.

L. 5, **Wren's bridge**: the bridge just above (*i.e.*, south of) the celebrated ' Bridge of Sighs ', St. John's College, Cambridge, erected from Wren's design between 1696 and 1712. See *St. John's College Quatrocentenary volume*, p. 44, and J. Bass Mullinger, *St. John's* (" College Histories "), pp. 193-5. This information I owe to the author, Mr. A. Y. CAMPBELL, Professor of Greek in Liverpool University, who adds that the sonnet embodies an actual experience.

CXLIV. **Inversnaid**, Stirling: the burn is on its way to Loch Lomond. The rhythm, in its mingled roughness and swiftness, conveys the impression of an impetuous torrent tearing down over obstacles. The pictures are vivid; and the praise of " wildness and wet " is part of the reaction to untamed Nature from the excessive growth of towns. The one criticism to which the poem is exposed is that it is writ in no language, *i.e.*, it uses English and Scottish

words indifferently. **rollrock**: adj., rolling over rocks. **In coop and in comb**: in the narrows and on the crest of the wave. **Flutes**: sends into grooved channels. **twindles**: divides into two. **It rounds and rounds**: the eye of the despondent but fascinated beholder is carried round and round with the water till he sees the stream go over the edge into the pool beneath, and (in spirit) he goes over too. **Degged**: soaked—a dialect word used in Lancashire and Cumberland. **braes**: hillsides. **heathpacks**: tufts of heather. **flitches**: tall tufts—this use of the word may be Hopkins's own invention. **beadbonny**: lovely with berries.

CXLV. The saying that " Language achieves its finest effects by reserve " is illustrated by this poem, which by this quality, as well as by the simplicity of its narrative, recalls some of the best of the old ballads. Its depth of moral feeling gives it a still closer affinity to the songs of Blake.

CXLVI.-CLII. A group of poems about children.

CXLVI. MARY COLERIDGE (1861–1907), a great-niece of S. T. Coleridge, and herself described by one of her friends as " all poet and three-quarters saint ", was never married; but the intimate feelings of motherhood were never expressed with finer sympathy than in this little poem. " I am indebted to Lady Newbolt for the complete version, here first printed " (B.). *Metre.*—A dactyl followed by a trochee; in the second and fourth lines the trochee is reduced to a single long syllable.

CXLVII. The mother is ' modern ' because the introspective analysis of her feelings is modern. She is overwhelmed by an impulsive outburst of affection from her child, going far beyond what she had looked for. The truthful light shining in the child's

eyes is a safe guide in **this dusk of days** (this time of uncertainty in religious beliefs), giving assurance of the best things in life ; and earth is **constant** because the deepest things, like the tie between mother and child, are founded in nature and enduring. With this may be compared a beautiful poem by a 'modern' father, H. C. Beeching's *Fatherhood* (in *Poems of To-day*).

CXLVIII. A sonnet worthy of Wordsworth in its grave simple dignity. **likelihood**: expectation, promise ; cp. Shakespeare, 1 *Henry IV*. iii. 2. 45, " A fellow of no mark nor likelihood ".

CXLIX. The charm of a child's smile, free both from self-consciousness and from distrust of others, and expressing only happiness, is well represented here. Cp. CXIX. and a delightful poem by H. Macnaghten in *Poems on Infancy and Childhood* (G.T. Series).

Mr. HILAIRE BELLOC is better known as a writer of prose than as a poet ; but his best work in prose is often illuminated by poetic imagination, and his verse, whether grave or gay, has distinction.

CL. Another glimpse of childhood seen through older eyes. A father, watching his little daughter, and conscious of the unflinching scrutiny with which the child watches him, realises that the child belongs to the new generation which will grow up with its own ideas and sit in judgement upon its predecessors. In its sympathy and self-scrutiny, in the simple yet dignified and carefully-chosen diction, and in the deft handling of the irregular metre, the poem resembles Coventry Patmore's odes (cp. LXXXIII.).

FORD MADOX FORD [HUEFFER], *b.* 1873, has written the life of Madox Brown, the artist, novels (two in collaboration with Joseph Conrad), and poems.

CLI. The song of a faery, promising that the child who goes with her will escape the sorrows of mortality: founded on the Irish superstition that the faeries spirit away human children. The scene is laid in Donegal. Finely imaginative and of a plaintive and haunting melody.

CLII. The glee of the children is in harmony with the glee of Nature. But the scene is described in the past tense, as by one looking back wistfully, like Wordsworth in his great Ode, to the vanished glories of childhood.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL ("A. E."), *b.* 1867, is one of the most distinguished of modern Irish poets.

CLIII. The old idea that the spirits of the dead still hover about the dwelling where they passed their lives (cp. XXXV., st. 6) has never found more vivid or more haunting expression than in *The Listeners*. A traveller comes back to his old home, only to find it desolate: his knocking elicits no response, but the ghosts in the house are aware of his coming, and he is made strangely aware of their silent presence. *Metre.*—Three accents in each line. The number of syllables in the line varies greatly, and the pace of reading should be slowed or quickened to make the lines of equal time-length. The music of the piece is greatly enhanced by the subtle alliteration.

CLIV. The picture, or rather series of pictures, is drawn slowly, with one patient stroke after another, till we see the whole panorama unroll itself with the distinctness of a pre-Raphaelite painting. The effect of the silence, and of the sounds that break the silence, is skilfully rendered; and the group of boys, enjoying in different but characteristic ways the novelty of the snow, may be compared with the groups which Flemish painters so often brought

into their pictures. *Metre.*—Five accents in each line. Observe the interweaving of the rhymes.

CLV. Modern poets have not seldom projected themselves sympathetically into the minds of animals (*e.g.*, R. Hodgson in *The Bull*, James Stephens in *The Snare*) ; but has any poet beside Brooke entered into the feelings of a fish ?

whorl: the ring of leaves and other growths round the stem of a plant. **Bulbous, or pulled to thin**: sometimes the weeds swell into a spherical shape, sometimes they are elongated in the water. **March narrows**: the stream is shrunken in the dry March wind. In the latter part of the poem the joy of human lovers in the starlit world of tropical seas (cp. Wordsworth's *Ruth*) is contrasted with the blind impulse of the fish under the mud, and his real though unconscious delight in the rhythm of the tide and the other surroundings of his dark underworld. *Metre.*—The old familiar octosyllabic couplet is handled with easy mastery, and the rhythm conveys the sensation, now of persistent swimming through all entanglement, now of effortless gliding down a smooth stream.

RUPERT BROOKE (1887–1915), Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, son of a Rugby master, was a writer of great promise, whose death in the Great War, predicted in his own sonnets, caught the popular imagination and won for him immense fame.

CLVI.-CLXII. The romance of the Sea and of Travel.

CLVI. The sight of old ships sailing on the Mediterranean calls up two visions of the past—one of Genoese pirates attacking a merchant ship, the other of a still remoter day when Odysseus (Ulysses) and his men, returning from Troy, got out

of their course and came to Circe's island of *Aeæa* (*Odyssey* X.). **Famagusta**: harbour on E. coast of Cyprus.

J. E. FLECKER's " career of bright promise was cut short in 1915 by his death from consumption. He had served in the Consular service at Constantinople, Smyrna, and Beyrout. *The Old Ships* appeared after his death " (B.).

CLVII. Mr. WILFRID W. GIBSON, in his three little volumes of verse called *Fires* (from the first of which this poem is taken), and in his prose dialogues, *Daily Bread*, has clearly followed the object proposed by Wordsworth in his Preface (1800) to *Lyrical Ballads*—" to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and at the same time to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect ; and, further and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature ". The language and metre are studiously simple,—but the pictures stand out vividly, and the linking of the rhymes from stanza to stanza helps the effect of a breathless suspense shared by narrator and listeners. The three birds would be accepted by the sailor who tells the tale as a powerful omen of evil, and the tragedy is heightened by being left unexplained. Wordsworth would have admired, and could hardly have surpassed, the restrained pathos. **Flannan Isle** is one of the outer Hebrides.

CLVIII. The theme, a poet's imagination accompanying a ship upon its voyage, recalls Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, §§ 9, 10, 17, and one or two of Clough's *Songs in Absence*, but perhaps in the delicate lilt of

the verse and the play of wistful fancy some of Ovid's Epistles from exile present the closest parallel. *Metre.*—Five accents in each line. Stanzas of 8 lines rhyming *a b a b b c b c*; lines 1, 3, 6, 8 have a trochaic ending. St. 1, **urgent**: strongly compelling thee to seek it. St. 3, **for all I have given thee**: for all the noble purpose my fancy has endowed thee with.

CLIX. This description of a ruined temple of Venus on the bay of Naples comes as near as poetry can, by vivid colour and detailed particularity of observation, to the sister art of painting. The ingenious freshness of the rhymes is also notable. St. 4, **flaws**: gusts. St. 7, **pirate-Pompey**: Sextus Pompeius, son of Pompey the Great, made Sardinia and Corsica his headquarters at one period of the civil wars and harassed the Italian coast.

CLX. A revel of music and colour, full of the mysterious enchantment of the east, the marvel of travellers' tales, the lure and terror of the desert. *Metre.*—8 accents in each line; each line is divided into two distinct halves by a cæsura, and the cæsura is often emphasised by an internal rhyme. The metre is founded on a Persian metre, and the internal rhymes are a characteristic of Persian verse. These internal rhymes and the frequent alliterations give an impetuous swiftness to the poem. In his metrical effects Flecker probably owes something to Kipling's *Seven Seas*, as Miss Sackville-West's *Mirage* in its turn owes something to Flecker.

L. 8, **Diarbekir**: the ancient Amida, a town on the Tigris. L. 16, **nightingale**: see l. 33, "bird-voiced singing-man". L. 38, **a monstrous wing**: see the story of Sindbad the Sailor in the *Arabian Nights*. L. 39, **a rock that screams**: cp. the Greek legends of the Symplegades, the clashing rocks which guarded the entrance to the Euxine, and of

Scylla and Charybdis. L. 43, **Solomon**: the Talmudic story of his magic ring may be read in the notes to Sale's Koran. L. 52, **Homs, Hama**: towns on the road from Damascus to Aleppo. L. 60, **Salaam Aleikum**: the Arab greeting, "Peace be upon you!" L. 63, **Mihrab**: the prayer-niche in an Arab mosque indicating the direction of Mecca L. 64, **booming Sinai**: from which the Law was given in thunder. L. 65, **her single horn**: the crescent moon. L. 72, **ghost-life's phantom-pain**: to the devotee this life is an illusion, real life begins after death.

CLXI. The affixed date (276 B.C.) shows that we are to imagine this charming idyll of the Mediterranean an epistle in verse from the Greek poet Theocritus, who was born in Cos and afterwards lived in Sicily and at the court of King Ptolemy in Egypt. One of the real idylls of Theocritus was written to accompany a distaff sent as a present to a friend's wife; and **Battos** and **Laco** are names of Sicilian shepherds in the Idylls. The *Metre* is that of Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*. Keats is recalled, too, by the movement of the verse and by the diction, though with no loss of individuality, and we may be sure that the author of *Endymion* would have been pleased to think that another English poet, at a still later day, would "touch the beautiful mythology of Greece" without dulling its brightness.

St. 3: the poet consoles his toiling friend by the reminder that gods have worked hard—Apollo and Poseidon (Neptune) in building the walls of Troy for Laomedon, Hephaestus (Vulcan) in making armour for Achilles.

St. 4: a girl or boy, reduced to ill-temper by over-fatigue, rises next morning from a dreamless sleep restored to good humour. **worthy Troilus**: "worthy to be a school- or college-friend of Troilus.

For us, I suppose, Shakespeare's Troilus is the most living, while a Sicilian may be supposed to have had some such idea of the youngest son of Priam, as much from poems now lost, as from those that survive" (Mr. Sturge Moore).

St. 6, **Ariadnē**, left desolate by Theseus on the island of Naxos, was consoled by the love of Bacchus. **drone**: the bass-pipe. **revel**: cp. Keats, *Endymion*, Bk. IV., "And as I sat, over the light-blue hills. . . ."

St. 7, **Hēlios**: the sun-god.

St. 9, **Protēūs**: an old man of the sea, who tended flocks of sea-monsters.

St. 11, **Iacchus**: another name of Bacchus. **Cypris**: Aphrodite is a goddess of the sea as well as of love; she is called 'Cyprian' because she rose from the sea and stepped ashore on Cyprus.

St. 12, **this king**: Ptolemy II.

CLXII. The swift anapæsts and triple rhymes convey the irresistible gallop of conquering horsemen; and this sense is assisted by the sounding names of places far apart but brought within the compass of a single expedition.

St. 1, **Kings of the Sunset**: kings of western Europe. St. 2, **Merou**: Merv. **Balghar**: Bulghar, the ancient capital of the Turco-tatan Bulgars; cp. Huart, *Histoire des Arabes*, II. 106, "il est certain qu'ils (*i.e.* les marchands arabes) remontaient le Volga jusqu'à Boulghâr". **Rum**: Roum, the Saracen name for the Eastern Empire and for its capital Constantinople. **the plain**: the plain by the Guadalete (near Medina Sidonia) where the Muslim army of 12,000 under Tāriq beat Roderic the Goth and his 100,000 men in Sept. A.D. 711. **Jalūla**: a strong fortress of the Persians, almost due N. of Baghdad. It was captured by the Muslims in 637 with great spoil and multitudes of prisoners.

St. 3, **pool**: references to pools and wells are naturally very common in Arab poetry. **rock of Stamboul**: the granite column at Constantinople which commemorates the victory of Claudius at Nissa in 269, and which the Muslim invaders must certainly have seen.

CLXIII.-CXC. Love in many aspects. CLXIII. Simple as is the thought, the completeness with which the second stanza corresponds to the first gives a touch of inevitability: the rare perfection is attained of a lyric by Heine or of Landor's *Rose Aylmer* (XXXVII.).

CLXIV. Ἔρως (Bodily Love) is an instinct pervading the race; natural, "the flower of lovely youth"; and in its strength and allurement taken by Plato in the *Symposium* to symbolise the desire for ideal Beauty and Truth. Yet is it unspiritual ('unchristen'd'), irrational, un-moral; and humanity, that feels its immense power, feels also the instinct to veil it in darkness. L. 8, **might compare**: could make images equally beautiful, before time had decayed from his statues the colours with which they were originally painted.

CLXV. The girl's advice to her lover was *Carpe diem*, enjoy life and love while you can; but ambition constrained him to another course, and now he looks back with a vain regret to the happiness he has missed. In this simple strain the living Celtic poet may be said to revive the *Irish Melodies* of Tom Moore a century ago, but with a tenderer wistfulness. **salley**: willow, Lat. *salix*; Fr. *saule*.

CLXVI. A pre-Raphaelite picture of a simple but beautiful figure in white upon a dark background, sketched almost entirely in monosyllables. The apparent irregularity of the metre disappears when we recognise that there are only two stresses in each

line, and that, rightly read, each line has the same rhythmical value.

CLXVII. " From *Diversi Colores*, printed for the author, 1891. HERBERT HORNE is best known by his scholarly and majestic book on Botticelli. In his younger days he wrote poetry, practised architecture and other arts, and designed founts of type for printing " (B.). The lover, though thrilled by the presence of the beloved, forbears to interrupt her devotions. L. 7 is explained by the Latin motto, which adapts to higher uses a quotation from Ovid, *A.A.* iii. 549, *Est deus in nobis et sunt commercia coeli* (" There is a God within us, and we have intercourse with heaven ").

CLXVIII. L. 10 means that in perfect bliss there is no looking before and after, and it is as if immortality were realised : cp. XIII. l. 14 and CLXIX. l. 8.

CLXIX. The feeling of love's triumph over time, expressed here and in the preceding poem, is an illusion ; and in the last line of the sonnet we are made aware of this.

CLXX. The title is a quotation from Horace, Odes IV. 1, " I am other than I was when kind Cinara was queen " ; but the sick passion recalls Catullus more closely than Horace.

ERNEST DOWSON was one of the 'decadent' poets of the 'nineties' of last century, much influenced by Baudelaire and Verlaine. He died in 1900, aged 33.

CLXXI. A tragedy of dead love. The scene is a seashore, as in Meredith's series of poems on the same theme (XXXVIII.-XLI.). ARTHUR SYMONS (*b.* 1865), whose first book was an *Introduction to the Study of Browning*, has published several volumes of criticism as well as several of poetry.

CLXXII. *Amantium irae amoris integratio* says the proverb, but a deeper note is struck here—remorse

for the bickerings which spill the most precious wine of life. STEPHEN PHILLIPS (1865–1915), poet, tragedian and actor. His poetry and his plays enjoyed great popularity for some years ; this has passed away, but some of his verse will survive in anthologies.

CLXXIII. The only example of " free verse " which is given a place in this anthology. It is not very far removed from that " mode of impassioned prose " which De Quincey practised, but as it is more definitely written (and printed) in lines, each of which represents a rhythmical bar, it falls on the other side of the border between prose and poetry. Alliteration plays a great part in its music, and the careful distribution of pauses. The similitude of the city is finely maintained to the climax—the image of Christ weeping over Jerusalem ; and the brief concluding line recalls, besides that incident, the unforgettable pathos of the shortest verse in the A.V. of the Gospels, " Jesus wept ".

CLXXIV. Song from Act III. Sc. i. of *The Tragic Mary*. Every line of the song ends with " dead " or a word rhyming with it in purposeful monotony.

CLXXV. and CLXXVI. treat of the same theme, though from the man's and the woman's side respectively,—the thought of a passion banished deliberately through the day, as conflicting with duty or for some other reason unrealisable, but taking possession of the soul completely in the hours of weakness, darkness and solitude. Mrs. Meynell's beautiful sonnet has been censured for investing a moral weakness with poetic glamour ; but a mood of weakness sometimes finds its best safety-valve in artistic expression.

CLXXVII. A poem of disillusion, which would be the saddest in the book if it represented more than

a passing mood. *Metre.*—Octosyllabic couplets, written with that freedom and sureness of melody with which Mr. Yeats always uses them, and for which Coleridge set the example in *Christabel.*

CLXXVIII. Disillusion again, but not ending in cynicism—only in the resolve of the lovers to face the truth about themselves and each other. L. 6, **naked majesty**: the cloudless sky, revealing the starry universe, symbolises truth. Cp. Wordsworth's sonnet on Milton (G.T. 257), " Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ".

CLXXIX. One of the most beautiful of love-poems —love thought of as a tide flooding the subconscious depths of being with a great happiness. So there is no suggestion of the turbidity of passion, but rather of a pervasive and purifying sea, " the moving waters at their priestlike task Of pure ablution round earth's human shores " (Keats, G.T. 242).

CLXXX. A vision of the Blessed Damozel. The lover's thoughts go up to her in heaven as in a dream, and he beholds her unchanged from what she was on earth : " Sleep, Death's twin brother, knows not Death, Nor can I dream of thee as dead " (Tennyson, *In Memoriam,* 68). **Lyra**: the very name of the constellation suggests the music of the spheres, while Lucidé, the starry name of the beloved, has a hint of the lovely Greek myths that transformed mortal maidens into stars (Andromeda, Cassiopeia).

CLXXXI. Another dream of the Blessed Damozel. But here she is not thought of as unchanged (as in CLXXX.), nor as occupied with expectation of her earthly lover (as in Rossetti's poem, XC.), but as having passed on, like Lycidas, to the joys of the blest, so that even the half-remembrance of her lover visits her only as " a passing breath ". The

lover's fear that " the dear trivial things " cannot survive death is an exquisite touch. " From *Primavera*, poems by four authors, Oxford, 1890 " (B.).

CLXXXII. The wisdom of love is perfect frankness, resulting in perfect intimacy. Eight finely concentrated lines, as in Wordsworth's " A slumber did my spirit seal ".

CLXXXIII. **the secret of the sun**: the undying fire that sustains all life. Love between man and woman is identified, as in Lucretius's invocation of Venus, in Bk. I. of the *De Rerum Natura*, with the great life-giving power of the Universe.

CLXXXIV. " The musings or comments of the poet, prefacing and interrupting the story, are here omitted " (B.). The legend of Bailé and Aillinn is translated in Eugene O'Curry's *MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, pp. 465-475. Bailé was an Ulster prince and Aillinn a princess of Leinster. They loved each other and arranged to meet on the south side of the Boyne. But Aengus, the Master of Love, wishing them to be happy in his own land among the dead, told to each a story of the other's death, so that their hearts were broken and they died. A yew-tree sprang from Bailé's grave, an apple-tree from Aillinn's. The poets and seers of Ulster made a tablet of the yew-tree and wrote in it " the Visions and the Espousals and the Loves and the Courtships of Ulster ". The seers of Leinster did the like with the apple-tree. When Art was monarch of Erin (A.D. 166) the two tablets were brought to him at a festival, and they sprang together, so that they could not be separated.

CLXXXV. " There is no sorrow greater than remembering happier days in the midst of misery ", says Dante (*Inferno*, v. 121-3) in the lines echoed by

Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*. But that is not the whole story: even in sorrow memory has sweetness as well as pain.

CLXXXVI. The loving kiss of a bright happy child awakes in the poet a poignant memory of an episode in his life of poverty in London—a homeless night under the stars; dawn, and the apparition of a child of the streets, who bestowed an alms upon him, and then straightway fled. The child's kiss is precious and life-giving like that memory; though worldly wisdom may charge him with foolishness on the ground that the child's path in life must be diverse from his own. A close literary parallel is De Quincey's account of Ann of Oxford Street, the poor girl who befriended him in his early wanderings in London (*Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*). Both the prose and the poetry doubtless commemorate a genuine experience.

L. 6, **inquisition of each star**: cp. James Thomson in LXXIV., st. 3, and Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 519, *Testatur moritura deos et conscia fati sidera*. L. 39, **all-kissing sun**: cp., *Hamlet*, II. ii. 181 and *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. iii. 26. L. 43, **whitest witchery**: white magic. L. 44, **cestus**: Greek and Latin, the charmed girdle of Venus. L. 58, **my falcon spirit**: my spirit is justified in fixing its aim upon the remembrance of the child's affection, even as the falcon fixes its aim on the covert in which its prey last took refuge.

CLXXXVII. "Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 116, G.T. 31). Yes, true love does change, but only by continual deepening.

CLXXXVIII. See notes on CLXIII. and CLXXXII.

Mrs. WOODS, daughter of Dean Bradley and wife of a former Master of the Temple, has written not

a few fine poems and several novels of exceptional quality.

CLXXXIX. " EDWARD THOMAS, killed in the war, turned from prose to poetry late in his life, publishing his verse under the name of Edward Eastaway " (B.). A parable : the lover feels himself to be but dark earth on which the beautiful bright cloud of his love casts a yet darker shadow. He consoles himself with the thought that this shadow, remembered in his verse, will perpetuate his lady's beauty. Cp. Shakespeare, Sonnet 65, G.T. 6 :

> O ! none, unless this miracle have might,
> That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

Metre.—Three accents in each line ; in the penultimate line they fall on the last three monosyllables (' small dark spot ').

CXC. The rejected lover refuses the consolation proffered him, that Time will soon lessen the beauty of his mistress. *Metre*.—The fourteen lines are written as seven successive rhyming couplets, but the variety of the pauses and the unity of the thought combine to give the effect of a sonnet. L. 12, When àll | the wìld | súmmer | was ìn | her gàze.

CXCI.-CC. The mystery of life and personality.

CXCI.-CXCII. Two sonnets on human personality, of deep feeling and penetrating insight, that recall the most poignant of Shakespeare (Sonnets 129 and 146). How strange that the soul (CXCI.) should have such strong links both with heaven and with earth ! God is immanent in it (CXCII.), but we clothe it in darkness and feed it on ' dusty folly '. Cp. Emily Brontë's poems, IV., LI. and CXV.

CXCIII. The punning title, a whimsical variation of ' Knight-Errantry ', hardly prepares one for the weird imaginativeness here revealed or the skill

with which ideas, made familiar in recent years by such studies of primitive beliefs as Frazer's *Golden Bough*, are turned into the essential stuff of poetry. In sleep the primitive soul of man escapes from all constraining bonds, and its affinities with the wild creatures assert themselves. **Proserpine** is child of the earth-mother (Demeter) but also queen of Hades : the errant soul, wandering into the shades, becomes for the time her subject : at the moment of waking—this is the belief of many primitive peoples—the soul flies back to the body.

Maurice Hewlett is best known as a writer of romances, *The Forest Lovers*, etc., but his genius was equally at home in poetry. He " began as a poet and wrote much verse in later life. His poetic power is best displayed in his epic *Song of the Plow* and in *The Village Wife's Lament* " (B.).

cxciv. A fitting pendant to the preceding poem. As Plato taught (*Rep.* ix. 571 C and 588 C-D) man is a composite creature, having under the outward form of a man not only the rational element, which is proper to humanity, but a lion and a many-headed monster, the wild-beast passions which need to be controlled. No finer use has ever been made of this image than by Mr. Stephens here ; though the likeness to Plato may be accidental, for with Plato the lion represents courage and is distinct from the monster, in the modern poet the lion is identified with the monster.

Mr. James Stephens is an Irish writer whose prose romances, *The Crock of Gold* and *The Charwoman's Daughter*, are no less rich in imagination than his poetry.

cxcv. The solidarity of the sentient universe. This is a favourite doctrine of the Buddhists ; but we may find it also in *The Ancient Mariner*, in the curse that follows the shooting of the albatross and

in the lifting of the spell when the mariner blesses the water-snakes.

CXCVI. In a dark wood at night, on the journey of this life, the poet sees a pale face looking down reproachfully upon him, a face that he does not know. How can he have wronged it? Humanity is mysteriously linked together, and the sin of humanity, the sin that is bred in our bones and that we fail to recognise. The vision recalls the parable (*Matt.* xxv. 44), "Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." So the unknown face passes into the likeness of the Man of Sorrows, crowned with thorns. *Metre.*—Three accents in each line. Read with due slowness and emphasis, the last line loses its apparent irregularity.

CXCVII. "The text of the title is taken from *Jeremiah* xii. 1" (B.). Though its rugged rhythm is strongly individual, this sonnet is Miltonic in structure, the chief pauses coming in the middle of the line. L. 4, Dísap | poíntment | all I′ | endeáv |-our énd |. L. 13, **Time's eunuch**: condemned to barrenness of life. L. 14, **Mine**: anticipating "my roots" in impassioned pleading.

CXCVIII. With penetrating ballad-like simplicity Mary Coleridge reinforces the teaching of the *Magnificat*, so often repeated heedlessly in choirs and places where they sing. Her clear insistence on its meaning is the more notable because she sometimes professed to "dislike the poor". Really, she gave her life to their service, but she was often pained when those she helped with a generous giving of her heart failed to respond to her trust

with the like frankness. L. 24, **Oh, listen . . .**: from Scott's *Rosabelle*. *Metre.*—Four accents in each line. L. 25 = And the rích | he hath sént | émpty | awáy.

CXCIX. EVELYN UNDERHILL has written upon mysticism, and in her own verse has followed, like Quarles and Traherne and Emily Brontë, the mystical way. The beautiful story of St. Francis of Assisi choosing the Lady Poverty for his bride has invested with a glory the Umbrian hills on which he lived. Why does Poverty in London streets wear no halo? The poverty of St. Francis did not mean solitude, for he conversed with God; but "a crowd is not company . . . where there is no love," and it is possible to live in a crowd and lack the comfort of communion with both God and man. (Cp. Alice Meynell's *The Lady Poverty* in *Poems of To-Day*.)

CC. Yet assuredly Poverty does not exclude love and happiness. Rather, we lose these good things by foolishly supposing the burdensome refinements of an over-elaborate civilisation to be indispensable.

A. S. CRIPPS, scholar of Trinity College, Oxford, and missionary in Mashonaland, has published several small volumes of delicately beautiful and musical verse, chiefly on religious themes.

CCI. The poet idealises the character of Charles I., who certainly had a fine taste in art (st. 11), showed great courage at the last (st. 9), and was sincerely religious (st. 11), though the *Eikon Basilike*, written to foster the belief in his saintliness, was a forgery. By a strange irony of fate two of the most beautiful statues in London, this (by Hubert le Sœur, 1633), and the bronze statue of James II. (by Grinling Gibbons) near the Admiralty buildings, commemorate the two most unfortunate of Stuart kings,

the one beheaded in London, the other driven thence into exile.

Even in the heart of London (argues the poet) night makes it possible to escape from the crowd and recover the sense of the wide spaces of the Universe and the majestic movement of the stars. So the king, defeated by the crowd, is thought of as triumphing after death in co-operation with the undefeated Divine purpose. For other readings of the stars as seen from London see LXXIV. (James Thomson) and CLXXXVI. (Francis Thompson). St. 9, Charles declined to plead before the Court which tried him: he was refused leave to speak after his sentence.

LIONEL JOHNSON (1867–1902) died at thirty-five, but is remembered for some poems of fine taste and feeling, and for his book on *The Art of Thomas Hardy*.

CCII. A variation upon the theme of the great passage in *Ecclesiasticus* xliv. The praise of the forgotten dead may be illustrated by a fine passage in Carlyle, *Past and Present*, Bk. II. ch. xvii.

CCIII. The first stanza repeats and advances the sentiment of the preceding poem: the recollection of the forgotten dead whose loyal work has made England is a healing thought. It is the thought which inspires the whole of Mr. Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*. St. 3, **Candlemas**: Feast of Purification of Virgin Mary, February 2.

CCIV. "Admiral Robert Blake attacked and destroyed the Spanish fleet at Santa Cruz in Teneriffe, 20th April 1657. Returning home, ill and worn out, he died at the entrance to Plymouth Sound, 7th August. The metre of the poem seems to have been suggested by the contrasted effect of alternate hexameter and iambic used by Horace in some of his odes" (B.).

Sir HENRY NEWBOLT first won fame by a slender volume of poems in praise of naval achievement, *Admirals All*.

CCV. Mr. Kipling's tribute to the county which he has chosen for the home of his later years—a county praised nobly also by Mr. Hilaire Belloc in his poem, *The South Country*. Born in Bombay, Mr. Kipling " had begun by knowing the Empire. Roving the seas, he had found it in all parts of the world. He had seen but the present of his country, and he had seen it expanded over the globe. Now that he had returned to the land of his fathers, and settled, far from the great highways, in one of those quiet southern counties where the legends and traditions of old England have survived, he learned to look at it in the perspective of the past, and to commune silently with its deep, abiding soul " (Chevrillon, *Three Studies in English Literature*, trans. by F. Simmonds, p. 98).

St. 2, **Levuka's trade** : the trade-winds of the South Pacific. Levuka is one of the Fiji Islands. St. 7, **Wilfrid** : Wilfrid of Ripon, a Northumbrian monk, who converted the South Saxons, the last people in England that remained heathen. St. 9, **the Long Man of Wilmington** : " a figure 240 ft. high, with a staff in each hand, cut out in the face of the chalk downs (renewed). It is due more probably to the Celts than to the monks of W. Priory, and may represent Baldur, as symbolic of spring " (Muirhead's Guide to England). **The Rother** enters the sea at Rye Harbour. **Our ports** : " The Cinque Ports developed their organisation as a fighting power in the eleventh century. They were falling into manifest decay in the fifteenth century, and they had virtually lost their trade and their utility to the national defence before the close of the sixteenth " (J. A. Williamson in *History*, July

1926). St. 10, **Piddinghoe**: a small village on the Sussex Ouse close to Newhaven.

CCVI. Hunting songs, that breathe the exhilaration of fresh air, motion and the chase, are plentiful enough. The qualities to be expected of a sportsman's song are not wanting here; but what distinguishes this poem is its sympathy with the hunted animal. The stag, undefeated in death, is the hero of the song. The scene is Exmoor; **Severn Sea** is the Bristol Channel.

For the hunting terms see Richard Jefferies' *The Red Deer*. A stag of five years is called 'runnable' or 'warrantable,' *i.e.* of an age to be hunted. 'Brow, bay, and tray' are the first three branches of a stag's horn. A 'brocket' is a two-year-old and has only straight horns.

JOHN DAVIDSON (1857–1909), born in Renfrewshire, was a journalist, dramatist and poet.

CCVII. *Facit indignatio versum.* The feeling is that which inspired Blake's *Jerusalem* and many noble passages in Ruskin—especially the famous words in the chapter on the Nature of Gothic in *The Stones of Venice*: "Men may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and skin which, after the worm's work on it, is to see God, into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with,—this is to be slave-masters indeed."

The hard metallic rhythm accords with the theme, whilst the hammer-beats relentlessly fashion out their prophecy of doom for the spoilers of the beauty of England. St. 4, **molten bowels**: as of the brazen bull of Phalaris, the tyrant of Agrigentum

in Sicily, or of the images of Chemosh, god of the Moabites, in whose worship children were made to pass through the flames.

Mr. GORDON BOTTOMLEY is best known for the plays in which he has ventured to handle themes that directly recall Shakespeare's tragedies, *King Lear's Wife* and *Gruach* (the earlier life of Lady Macbeth).

CCVIII. W. S. BLUNT (1840–1922) was a poet of real individuality, especially successful in sonnets. He travelled much, and here expresses, as Browning in *Home Thoughts from the Sea*, an Englishman's pride in England's wardenship of the seas. L. 6, **accomplished**: cp. *Isaiah*, xl. 2, "her warfare is accomplished." L. 9, **rock**: Gibraltar, known to the ancients as the Pillars of Hercules. The Goths had a kingdom in North Africa; the Moors established themselves in Barbary and Spain.

CCIX. To have captured a melody so simple and sure, that it almost sings itself as we read, and to have done it without any touch of commonness—such is Sir H. Newbolt's achievement here. Drake and Hawkins made a last expedition to the West Indies together in 1595, and both died at sea.

CCX.-CCXVII. A little group of lyrics evoked by the Great War. That so stupendous an event should not have left greater mark on English poetry may seem surprising; but the life-and-death struggle in which all civilisation was threatened with extinction was in many sensitive hearts a horror far too deep for words. Assuredly no verse gave finer expression than CCX. and CCXIII. to that wonderful mood of impassioned exaltation in which the young Englishmen of 1914 met the sudden call for patriotic self-surrender. Shortly afterwards the poet's untimely death deeply touched the imagination of his fellow-countrymen; and the nation recognised that in

these sonnets he had placed himself by the side of Keats, of all English poets the one remembered most fondly for early achievement and unfulfilled renown.

CCXI. Not only is St. George the patron-saint of England, but his day, April 23, is traditionally observed as the anniversary of both the birth and the death of England's greatest poet. Sir H. Newbolt's verses commemorate the self-sacrifice of a young Wykehamist who fell in the fighting in Flanders on that day. **Ypres** : a beautiful medieval city in Belgium, almost entirely destroyed in the War. **Domum** : the traditional Winchester school-song.

CCXII. Cp. several of Walt Whitman's poems in *Drum-Taps*, especially *Vigil strange I kept on the field one night*, *A sight in camp in the daybreak grey and dim*, *As toilsome I wandered Virginia's woods*, and *Dirge for Two Veterans*.

CCXIII. L. 11, Cp. Virgil, *Eclogue* iv. 6, *Iam redit et Virgo*, *redeunt Saturnia regna*, and Milton's Nativity Ode, ll. 141-8.

CCXIV. L. 7 may have a recollection of Keats's *Autumn* (G.T. 303) " Then in a *wailful choir* the small gnats mourn ".

" WILFRED OWEN, like Edward Thomas, C. H. Sorley and Rupert Brooke, was a victim of the war. He was killed in action, 1918 " (B.).

CCXV. Written near the end of the four years of war. What would we not give to have the horror of the war blotted out of our lives ? Yet we cannot, and do not, wish to be what we were before this experience wrought its effect upon us ; the agony has been a travail of rebirth. Diction and rhythm invest this poem with something of the solemnity and earnestness of Hebrew prophecy.

CCXVI. But has the war utterly changed life? Even in time of "the breaking of nations" (*Jeremiah*, li. 20), is it not clear that the old occupations of mankind, the subduing of the earth and love-making, persist unchanged?

CCXVII. The lifting of horror by the proclamation of the Armistice, November 11, 1918. The lengthening of the last line of the stanza assists the image of the bird's (and the song's) untiring flight. Mr. SIEGFRIED SASSOON is one of the most notable of the poets who have written out of their direct experience of the war.

CCXVIII. The mood of "The singing will never be done" soon has its reaction. Arnold said it was "the curse of life" that "each day brings its petty dust Our soon-choked souls to fill"; and some who bravely faced "the big things" of the war were less victorious over "the little things" that assailed them in the years that followed.

CCXIX.-CCXXV. Lessons from Nature. In CCXIX., the mind, unhealthily absorbed in an egoism which excludes the enjoyment of Nature, is likened to a hawk with its attention concentrated upon the desired prey. The tree (CCXX.), rooted to one spot, yet winning for itself a noble and joyous life, sets an example of persistent courage in triumphing over the constraint of circumstances. The spirit of Thoreau's *Walden* and of Andrew Marvell's "green thought in a green shade" (G.T. 142) is recalled by CCXXI. and CCXXII. The next three poems (CCXXIII.-CCXXV.) express that intimate oneness with Nature which it has been the special privilege of the modern poet to feel and to interpret. With Mr. Binyon's *Initiation*, the only one of his own poems which he has admitted to this anthology, describing the experience of a rare moment in which he seemed at once closest to earth and all sentient life and most

aware of spiritual exaltation, it is interesting to compare Wordsworth's account in *The Prelude*, Bk. IV., of his experience at dawn on a summer morning.

We may also regard *Initiation* as a link between Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* and Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, the one describing a purely sensuous, the other a spiritual and mystical, communion with Nature. Wherever such an experience is genuinely felt, it is *individual*, hence, when it finds expression, the expression is new. *Metre.*—There are signs, here and in CCXXVII., that rhymes are becoming less frequent in modern lyrical verse.

CCXXVI.-CCXXVIII. The spirits of houses. Cp. CLIII., *The Listeners*.

CCXXVI. *Metre.*—Three accents in the odd and two in the even lines. The vagueness and unhelpfulness of foreboding fears are finely touched in the last lines.

CCXXVII. A picture of a decaying house, with conjecture of what its last inhabitant may have been like. The quick movement of the verse, abounding in anapæsts, makes the help of rhyme less necessary ; and some readers will scarcely notice how few the rhymes are, whilst others may read nearly to the end without discovering that there are any at all. The final stanza conveys the impression of a dreary landscape as effectively as Browning's *Childe Roland*.

CCXXVIII. Mr. EDMUND BLUNDEN is in the right succession to the pastoral Virgil who sang " wheat and woodland, . . . hive and horse and herd " (LXXI.). His sympathy with the farm and its " cheerful noise " saves him from peopling the barn, for all his sense of its antiquity, with spectral fears.

CCXXIX. Of all modern elegies, this reproduces

most closely the finely chiselled beauty of classical sculpture and classical elegy. *Metre.*—Five accents in lines 1, 2, 4 ; three accents in line 3.

CCXXX. Echo has a great part in this dirge, as in the " Ding dong bell " of the dirge in the *Tempest* (G.T. 65).

CCXXXI. A Pagan answer to the Christian Parable of *Luke*, xii. 16-21. Mr. Hardy's mood is seldom so light-hearted as in these verses. **Ridgway** : the old grass-grown British trackway running along the ridge of the downs.

CCXXXII. We may be glad that what Coleridge would have called " a willing suspension of disbelief " suffered Mr. Hardy to draw this fascinating pre-Raphaelite picture of the kneeling oxen on Christmas Eve.

CCXXXIII. The Christmas bells of English village churches are celebrated in a lovely passage of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, 28. Here the present Laureate salutes them in verse that, harking back to the alliterations which in old English supplied the place of rhyme, conveys a sense of the long traditions of Christmas, the bells, and the churches.

CCXXXIV. The stanzas actually inscribed on Stevenson's grave in Samoa.

CCXXXV. The mood of Tennyson's *Ulysses*, or something sterner—as of men resolved, not on a last adventure together, but on a last desperate stand against the foe.

CCXXXVI. An " Outline of the World's History ". Looking back across the ages to the first ploughman who subdued the earth to the use of man, the poet sees him standing with bowed head at sunset, like the peasant in Millet's " Angelus ". Was his worship of gods a delusion ? Whatever be the

answer to that, it was just this capacity for worship, this power to imagine ideals, that lifted him above the brute and is the key to all his progress. *Metre.* —Free verse ; but many of the lines (like some of the most musical passages in the Psalms) could be scanned as hexameters.

CCXXXVII. Truth is progressive. It is not merely that " God fulfils himself in many ways Lest one good custom should corrupt the world ". It is that man can never rest in truth as something already attained ; he must always press on to further heights.

CCXXXVIII. Epilogue to *Emblems of Love.* Mr. LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE, poet and critic, is Professor of English Literature in Leeds University.

The praise of Love. The poet would fain give to the expression of his feelings the permanence of a beautiful building of stone. He falls to imagining a palace wrought by a Moorish king in Spain for his bride—an exquisite dream in stone with a court of transcendent beauty at its centre, for the exclusive delight of the royal lovers. If such a palace ever existed, it must have been destroyed by the Christian conquerors who expelled the Moors from Spain ; so the dream in stone was not permanent. After all, it is the poet who builds a *monumentum aere perennius* : his imaginations do not perish, for they are renewed in the mind of every reader, " never built at all, and therefore built for ever ". (Cp. Tennyson's *Gareth and Lynette* and Browning's *Abt Vogler.*) *Metre.*—A free treatment of the familiar octosyllabic couplet, in the true succession of Keats's *Eve of St. Mark* and the songs in Morris's *Jason.*

CCXXXIX. The discoveries of modern science invest life in some ways with a deeper seriousness : our minds are sensitive plates that record every

impression, and the impressions thus recorded influence directly our descendants and indirectly all with whom we come in contact : " the evil that men do lives after them " in another sense than Shakespeare knew. But we can uplift as well as depress ; for our thoughts can rise to Heaven (cp. CCXXXVI.), and that mystic communion can restore us to " God who is our home " (cp. G.T. 98, 338). The spiritual insight of the Rabbi, who cannot be other than the poet himself, may surprise some who have judged too hastily the limitations of Mr. Kipling's poetry.

CCXL. " The kingdom of God is within you." These last verses—they were found in the poet's desk after his death—are a lofty expression of Francis Thompson's creed. Cp. the last poem of Emily Brontë (CXV.).

CCXLI. " Hear the conclusion of the whole matter." The *Song of Honour*—a twentieth-century version of the *Benedicite Opera Omnia*—furnishes a noble ending to the anthology. For in it the high service of poetry, the making of new things familiar and of familiar things new, is accomplished, and " Creation's chorus " becomes audible to us : " Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge ; their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world ". (Mr. J. C. Bailey's *Whitman* has an interesting comparison of the *Song of Honour* with Whitman's *Salut au Monde*).

P. 150, **the testament of Beautysprite** : as in Keats's *Endymion* or his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. **The song of painters** : cp. Browning's *Fra Lippo Lippi*. P. 151, **robins' eyes** : a Celtic fancy. **Pleiades** : lit. ' the sailers ', the constellation by whose rising and setting Greek mariners fixed their times for sailing ; but Greek poets thought of these

stars as *peleiades*, *i.e.* doves, and invented myths to account for the name. P. 153, **music rise**: sc. I heard (p. 150).

Metre.—The rapid swing of the short lines and of the tripled rhymes assists the cumulative effect of " creation's chorus ".

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